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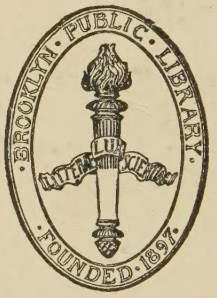

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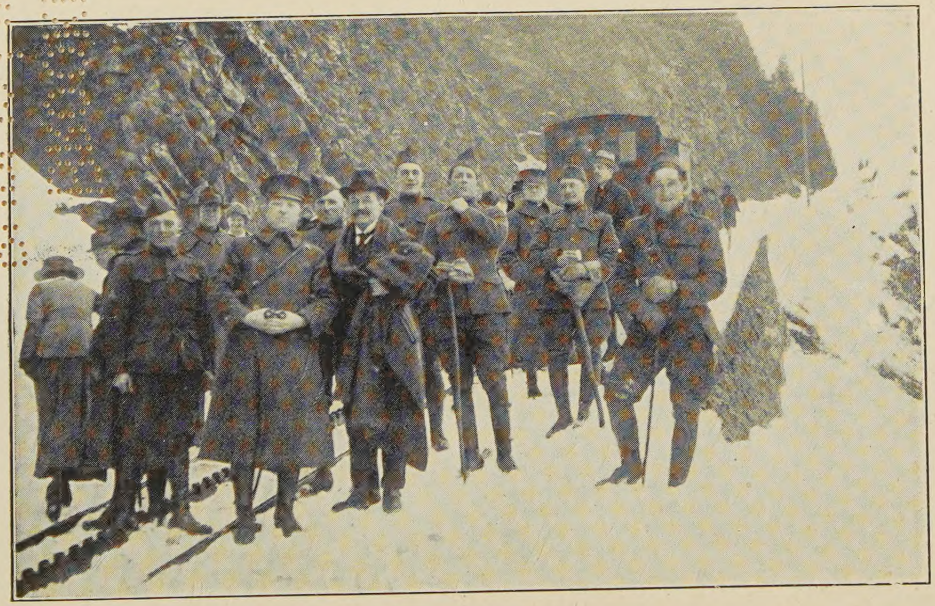

Soldiers on Leave in the French Alps

Port to Listening Post

HUGH T. KERR

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To My Friend

JAMES H. LOCKHART

"'Tis human fortune's happiest height to be
A spirit melodious, lucid, poised, and whole;
Second in order of felicity
I hold it, to have walked with such a soul."

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FOREWORD

Most of us, relatives and friends of our courageous warriors "over there," would be greatly pleased if it were possible for us to take up our abode in France during the duration of the war and so be near to help comfort and cheer our men in their great trials and also to enjoy on the ground with them their many triumphs.

The Young Men's Christian Association is endeavoring to give to the men overseas, as well as at home, in some degree many of the best things of home, church, school, club, entertainment, and friendship, from which they have been separated and which are so vital to them. The policy of the War Work Council of the Young Men's Christian Association is to send from time to time representatives of its Executive Committee to France for brief visits to study the work of the Association and to act as liaison officers between the New York and Paris offices.

In February, 1918, I was thus commissioned by the Executive Committee, and had the good fortune to secure the following gentlemen to cooperate with me in the work of the mission—Former Senator LeRoy Percy of Greenville, Mississippi, a member of the War Work Council; John C. Acheson, LL.D., President of the Pennsylvania College for Women, Pittsburgh, Pa.;

James W. Kinnear, Pittsburgh, Pa., President of the Washington Ordnance Company, Washington, D. C., and the author of this book. During the two months spent in France our commission was enabled to visit nearly all of the camps, from the ports of entry, through the great training areas in the center of the country, to the front line trenches, traveling nearly six thousand miles, and thus had unusual opportunities to view all the phases of the work at first hand and to meet thousands of the men in the service.

Dr. Kerr's delightful and winning personality brought him an immediate and constant response on the part of the individual soldier, whose intimate life he was therefore enabled to appreciate thoroughly. Combining with these qualities his rare insight and good judgment on matters of policy and procedure, Dr. Kerr has been able in this book to bring to the homes of America in a most graphic manner just those things that we would like to know concerning the welfare of the men of our glorious Army and Navy.

RALPH W. HARBISON.

Pittsburgh, Pa., November 1, 1918.

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CHAPTER I

THE COMING OF THE CONVOY

We were waiting the coming of the Convoy. It was expected to arrive some time during the night, and for its coming everything was ready—the docks, the stevedores, the tradesfolk of the port, the ships in the harbor, the officers of the Army and the Navy, and the men and women of the Y M C A. We, too, were restlessly ready, for the coming of the Convoy into port meant not only news and greetings from America, but also the defiance of Germany and victory for the Allied nations, and immediate opportunity for service.

The hours of waiting were spent in the fifth floor apartment where the "Y" chief and his assistant were making their home. The rooms were beautifully furnished and I was told that the father and son of the household had gone to war. The son had been killed and the mother and daughters were keeping the home together against the time of victory.

The guests of the evening were two distinguished officers, one of the Army and the other of the Navy. The Navy and its daring deeds held the center of interest and it was well and truly represented by our distinguished guest, whose name would be recognized were I at liberty to give it.

As a rule, men of the Army are the worst critics of the Army, and men of the Navy the severest judges of the Navy, but our hero of the sea was unstinted in his praise of the American Navy, and his comrade of the Army readily seconded all his optimistic overtures.

We were told tales of men who go down to the sea in ships and we picked our steps without blundering in the questions we asked and the information we sought. It is no easy task to ask sensible questions concerning military and naval secrets. I overheard a genial colonel graciously answer an unduly inquisitive war correspondent by saying, "It is not permissible for me to talk about that"! One can gather lots of news in France, but most of the news turns out to be rumor. There is a military proverb which passes as current coin in France to this effect: "He that knows doesn't talk, and he that talks doesn't know." The boys in the Army say, "A military secret consists of inaccurate information concerning something which nobody knows anything about and about which everybody talks."

We were told of the "mystery ships" which, having served their day, have passed into history. They were freighters of the sea, fitted with machine guns and manned by experts of the Navy, who were dressed like ordinary seamen. One of these "mystery ships" holds the record of having ended the career of five submarines. We were told how a submarine had come to the surface so close to a French cruiser that it was impossible for it to discharge its torpedo, lest the submarine itself should be destroyed. The gunners on

the cruiser turned their guns point blank and blew the German pirate to atoms.

We were told interesting tales of how submarines had fought submarines, which I suppose the censor would not choose to sanction for publication, but our guests were firm in the conviction that by the end of 1918 the submarine menace would be mastered. "Up to the present the policy pursued has been mainly defensive," one said. "Soon, however, something will happen and the end of the German submarines will come." Of course we wanted to ask another question so that he would explain exactly what he meant, but the bars were up and the subject of conversation changed. Afterwards, when we heard about Zeebrugge and how the British Navy had closed the port at Ostend, we thought we understood what he meant.

Throughout the Navy there seems to be a quiet and justified confidence that the submarine will be out of business before the year 1918 has run its course. We hear little of the daring deeds of the men of the Navy, but they are among our first heroes. All of them are on board some mystery ship and by day and night they keep the channels of the sea safe for the traffic of the nations of freedom. Every morning the British mine sweepers make the English Channel safe. It was interesting to learn that English mines, when they drift from their moorings, turn over and are harmless. German floating mines remain intact and explode anywhere.

The men of the navies of all the allied nations wear no medals, no *croix de guerre,* no distinguishing recog-

nition for service rendered, no badge to allure the ever vigilant spy. They sail they know not where, from unnamed port to unnamed port, and are out upon the sea from dawn to dark, from dark to dawn. These men are among the finest heroes the world has ever seen, and every man of them is worthy of the honor given to men in front line trenches.

The sailor at your side is sure to be a hero and his story will thrill you if you get him to tell it. Traveling through France I met a young Lieutenant of the French Navy, who did not seem to have passed his twentieth year. Educated in an English school, he had acted for two years as an interpreter with the English fleet. His father is a member of the French Parliament. He had been a year with the French fleet out on the Mediterranean, and had just been home on a fifteen-day holiday and was returning to another year's work. He had no knowledge of the military or naval situation, but he had absolute trust in his leaders and perfect confidence in the outcome. He had been torpedoed seventeen times, five times he had been in the water, and once he had seen seven of his comrades swept from the bridge in a storm. He would have been the last to think of himself as a hero, and he is typical of thousands who today defy Germany's danger zone.

In the morning the Convoy was in. Thirty thousand men had arrived, every man of them disappointed because the enemy had not been encountered, but all of them glad to see the land of the tricolor. There is little shouting and cheering in this war and the ships

had slipped into port unheralded. Only as the grey mist of the morning lifted did the newly arrived giants of the harbor reveal themselves. The Convoy had done its work and the ships had come safely in from sea. How strange they looked, each one splashed with color after a manner that defied all attempts at explanation! The science of camouflage follows its own order. Sometimes it is a mysterious and mottled order; sometimes it is plain and prosaic; sometimes it follows broad distinguished lines; sometimes it is fantastic and poetic; and again it is of an order that is murderously monotonous.

If today we fear the submarine less than we did, let us thank the Convoy. If the hands of the Germans are tied let us not forget that the Hun still prides himself in his pagan policy, and let us remember that the Allied Navy holds the supremacy of the sea. Since the war broke out the British Navy has transported 13,000,000 men, of whom only 2,700 have been lost. Besides these millions of men the British Navy has carried to the battle front 2,000,000 horses and mules, 500,000 motor cars, 25,000,000 tons of explosives and supplies, 51,000,000 tons of oil and fuel, and 130,000,000 tons of food, and has swept the warships of Germany from the sea. When it is within her power Germany still sends sailors and passengers adrift in open boats, and what that means only the thousands who have experienced it can know. I have heard soldiers and sailors in France try to describe the terror of those open boats. One American boy who had been brought into port, rescued by a British patrol boat, said, in

telling his experience, "I was in the sea for five hours. After I was picked up and brought to land, for three nights, in my dreams, I was in the water."

Mr. Alfred Noyes has described what sometimes takes place when men and women and little children fall into the hands of the modern disciples of Kultur.

"The two boats," he says, "kept together till dark; but at 8:40 P. M. the chief officer's boat capsized, owing to the choppy sea, and the sight of the other boat was lost in the confusion. All hands, after a struggle, managed to regain the boat, but she remained full of water, with her tanks adrift.

"Before midnight she had again capsized three times; and the reader may imagine for himself what scenes were enacted in that lonely darkness of wind and sea. Only four hands out of fifteen were left at the end of the third desperate struggle. They were the mate, the carpenter, and two seamen.

"They saw one or two vessels in the early morning, but their only means of signaling was a handkerchief on a stick, and they were not noticed. The boat was battered to and fro like a cockle-shell in the smoking seas; and about eight o'clock in the morning the two seamen became too exhausted to cling on. They were slowly washed overboard. Their faces and hands swirled up once or twice in the foam, and then disappeared.

"At five o'clock on that day, after long hours of struggle, the mate, who was sitting aft, gradually dropped into the water in the bottom of the boat and died there. The carpenter was now the only survivor. All that he endured in the long following night and day, with the dead man washing to and fro at his feet, and the dead face looking up at him through

the bubbling water, can only be imagined. He says that 'nothing particular happened.'

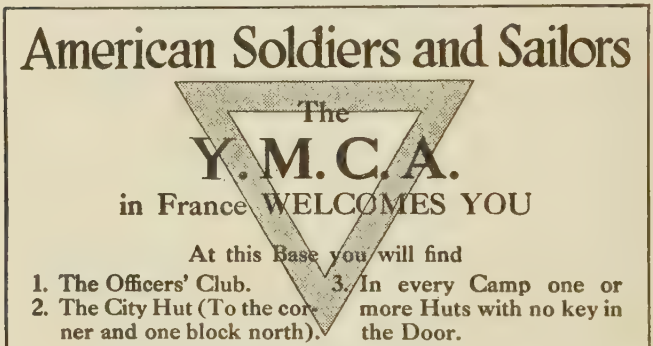
"At nightfall on the next day, more than twenty-four hours later, after twenty-four hours of lonely battering and slow starvation, he and the dead body were picked up by a Grimsby trawler and landed at St. Ives. Nothing was heard of the other boat."

Thanks to the Convoy, such stories of the sea are becoming less and less familiar. Victory, however, will not cause us to forget the price Germany must pay for peace. It must be nothing less than the price of penitence.

There is something about a Convoy that suggests security. It has the flavor of friendliness. My friend, Major Thomas S. Arbuthnot of Base Hospital 27, told me of the marvelous trip he and his comrades had experienced crossing the Atlantic, and how by a signal gun from one of the destroyers they had been saved from a submarine attack. He said, "Just to think of those little destroyers plunging through the sea, tearing through the darkness, undismayed and undaunted, never resting, never tired, and then when we had entered the harbor and felt the sense of security stealing over us, to see them turn and without a salute go back to sea to take up their vigil for other seafaring soldiers. I wanted at least to say, 'Thank you,' but they were gone." Hats off to the Convoy! Thomas Huxley, after he had seen the shipping of New York harbor, exclaimed, "If I were not a man, I would like to be a tug!" Had he lived in our day and known the new dangers and the new service of the sea, he

would say, "If I were not a man, and a soldier, I would like to be a submarine destroyer and convoy the soldiers of freedom to the shores of France."

Among the first to welcome the Convoy is the Y M C A. To *see* one's own language in a foreign land is like meeting a friend, and as the morning broke the troops on both sides of the ship were face to face with the sign of the Red Triangle and its welcome:


American Soldiers and Sailors
The
Y. M. C. A.
in France WELCOMES YOU
At this Base you will find
1. The Officers' Club.
2. The City Hut (To the corner and one block north).
3. In every Camp one or more Huts with no key in the Door.

On each troopship a "Y" Secretary had kept company with the men across the water. He had entered into close and friendly relations with them and by the time the Convoy was in port he had bound them to him in enduring friendship.

On board ship men have time to think and time to get acquainted. The Secretary discovers talent. On the ship which took us over we were in great need of a pianist and accidentally discovered him among a group of marines going over for hydroplane service.

He happened to be a Roman Catholic and was hesitant about playing at the Sunday morning service. He found out, however, that distinctions of civil life do not carry over into the Army. He knew how to play the piano and was eager to serve, and so together we made of the Sunday service a great success. Next day I found him depressed, his eyes filled with tears, and heard from him the story of his life. He had left at home a little motherless girl of four.

Sometimes a man among the troops finds the sea and the submarine and the danger zone all but too much for his courage. After three days down below where he had seen the doctor twice a day, a colored lad came on deck, rather weak and pale. The wind was blowing, southwest by west, and the boat was not, as you say, quite steady. One of our Y M C A men found him and said: "How are you going, George?" "Pretty poorly, Sir, I feel pretty low." Said his comforter, "Well, we'll soon be over now." "Yes," said George, "but the worse is yet to come. Them submarines live right in here, don't they?" The "Y" man told him about the speed of the ship and those dogs of war, the guns pointing out to sea, and after a few minutes of thought George said: "If I hadn't come on this trip, I'd been married next month." His friend said, "She'll wait for you, all right, and she'll think all the more of you for doing what you are going to do for her and your country."

After a long pause during which the ship tipped and rolled, George said: "I've been thinking a lot during these last few days and I have come to the con-

clusion that if I ever get through this voyage and do my bit, I'll never get into a place of excitement again." And having said this, he went below.

Every soldier has his own Convoy story. I was particularly interested in Joe Rogers' story. Joe is at present acting as chauffeur at one of the great rest camps. Accidentally we had him as our guest for luncheon at the Hôtel de France, in a little town that nestles close to the beautiful French Alps. Unaware that he was interesting he told us of his trip across the sea in one of the great converted German liners that now run between America and France. "I was six decks down," he said, "and it was like being in hell. There were six thousand of us on board that ship, and they would not let us sleep on deck. The port-holes were closed as tight as a bank vault, and you could see the darkness and cut the air with a knife." "I was six decks down," he repeated, "and every morning when the gong sounded I woke up unconscious and had to walk an hour on deck before I came to my senses. We ran out of one storm into another and I thought the end of the world had come. No! I was not sick, but you should have seen the bunch! It was like a street market on Saturday night. For three days the old boat played leap-frog with the waves, and sometimes when it didn't quite make the leap it would lie on the top of the wave and quiver until I wondered whether it would turn over again on its back, or topple over on its stomach, but of course it always came back. Four of the gunners were swept from the deck, and when we last saw them they were

on the crest of a wave, their hands up as if signaling a farewell. Ships at sea in war time do not stop at the call, 'Man overboard.' We had to sit on the floor when mess was served, and it sure was a mess! To keep from sliding I wrapped my legs around one of the pillars and had my hands free. They gave us Cream of Wheat for breakfast, but the floor and walls and sometimes the roof got most of the Cream of Wheat, and then when the ship lurched we all slid like an avalanche from one side to the other with a bang. I want to cross the darned old ocean once more, and that is when I go home."

Among the first to come on board the troop ships are the "Y" men. They take with them a few cigarettes, a little chocolate, and always a welcome. They answer questions and give directions about money, about France, about the life on shore, and hand the men a little printed slip with information to help them through their first days in France. They give advice concerning leisure time and directions about places and points of interest.

At one port of entry the men were given this printed welcome:

MEN, you are coming among a people, who have seen fought upon their soil many of the greatest battles in the history of the world, a people, whose sons have in this war gladly given their lives and who have been backed by unparalleled sacrifices on the part of their loved ones at home. It is they, with their splendid fighting brothers of the British Empire, who have stood, for nearly four years, between Germany and your own home land.

Remember always that you are in France as the GUESTS of a noble people and have come, not to win the war for the Allies, but to help them to win it. In the minds of the French people you represent the UNITED STATES, and wherever you go, we trust that by your exemplary conduct, your chivalry, and your respect for these people and their customs, you will endear yourselves to them and thereby cement the two Republics in an everlasting bond of mutual sympathy and respect. Remember too, that in France you are among a people who are universally polite and who set great store by the smaller courtesies of life. For the slightest service you will always receive thanks ("Merci, Monsieur") and will always be expected to give them.

God bless and keep each one of you.

THE AMERICAN Y M C A.

A thousand men had come ashore at one of the French ports where they mingled with the English Tommies, and I was permitted in one of the British huts to give them a welcome. The men had been at sea for nearly twenty days, and for twenty-four hours had been in the English Channel. They said they were lost in the mine fields. For nearly a month they had been out of touch with the world. They were hungry for news. I told them of the German drive on Paris, of Pershing's message to General Foch offering him the American Army, of British valor and French heroism, and of the hope which America through the coming of her soldiers had brought to the Allies.

The British soldiers with their seamed faces and weather-beaten countenances gave a touch of prophecy to the situation. Our lads—what was between them

and the seamed face and the weather-beaten countenance, and the dread monotony of war? The welcome was short, and then in a moment of heroism I told the new arrivals I would try to answer any of their questions. Immediately the machine gun batteries were opened:

"How far are we from the front?"
"How about the chow over here?"
"Do the soldiers get their pay regularly?"
"What will you give us for the head of the Kaiser?"
"Will there be a 'Y' wherever we go?"
"How often do we get our mail?"
"How many American soldiers are there in France?"

These are a few of the questions they asked. I tried to answer them. I told them that the mail was very uncertain, but that the number of letters they received depended on the frequency with which those at home wrote, and advised them to have their letters numbered, for they might get their fifteenth letter first. I offered them a commission and a life pension for the head of the Kaiser, and told them that I did not know how many American soldiers were in France, but hoped there would soon be enough to smash Germany.

Two men each volunteered a suggestion. The first remark was to the effect that if the Army did its work as well as the "Y," the war would soon be over, which statement was received with a round of applause. The second remark was facetious and interpretative of the coming of the Convoy. "If ever I get home and that Old Lady they call the Statue of Liberty wants to see me again she'll have to turn round."

CHAPTER II

THE SOUND OF THE GUNS

The heart of America is in France. A million and more of our boys are there and more are to follow. I have seen thousands of them and some whom I wished to see I failed to discover. But France is at war, and our Army is at war and is ever on the move. All we know is that they are "Somewhere in France." Said one lad when asked if he knew where a certain soldier was, "I know where I am; I don't know where anyone else is, and nobody knows where I am." Sometimes the censor relents and lets information regarding the whereabouts of a soldier go through to his family. Recently this statement was received: "I am sorry I cannot tell you where I am; but I venture to state that I am not where I was, but where I was before I left to go where I have just come from."

One knows as soon as he is in France that he is in a war atmosphere. Even before he lands he is face to face with mystery and the menace of war. There are Mystery Ships upon the sea, and the land is full of mystery. A little grove of pine trees may be a battery, and the hillside a fort. The hillside may look quite natural, when suddenly a gun speaks and you know that you are near the battle line. Everywhere there are signs warning you of danger. In the railroad

trains and in the stations one reads the words *"Taisez Vous, Mefier Vous, Les Oreilles Ennemies Vous Ecoutent."* Since the days when Governor Gallieni stood guard at Paris, when the Germans were driving along the Marne, that sign has been before the eyes of the French people, "Don't Talk, Beware, The Enemy is Listening."

Even Paris is like an armed camp. The poet somewhere speaks of Paris as a woman's town with flowers in her hair. But the Paris we remember is gone, and there is a new Paris—a Paris with hangars and airships, with cellar gratings sealed for an expected gas attack, with window panes reenforced with strips of paper, with no private automobiles, with hotel life stripped of fashion and luxury, with the Arc de Triomphe, the windows of the Louvre, and the statues in the Place de la Concorde buttressed and safeguarded with sandbags. It is Paris with dark nights and unlighted streets welcoming fog and rain and mist. It is Paris with signs upon the houses calling attention to caves, to improvised *abris,* where ten, fifteen, twenty, or one hundred people may find security when a raid is on. It is Paris with flickering blue street-lamps marking the crossings and the metropolitan stations. It is Paris alert and watchful, but self-reliant and secure. Candy shops and cigar stores are gone. Here and there the shutters on the windows bear the sign that the man power that carried on the business is at the front. The soldiers of all the Allied nations meet and pass often without salute, and fifty miles away the enemy is pounding at the door.

Nevertheless, with all the bombing and shelling, it is Paris. It is still Paris unshaken and unharmed. You have to search for the damage done after you thought the city had been shaken to its very foundation.

I was in Paris when the Germans expected to break through. The Kaiser is reported to have said: "They are not united, I will beat them." God knows how nearly he succeeded, and he timed his blows and concentrated all he had upon that drive. It was then that the mystery of the long-range gun and the bombing in the nights disturbed the confidence of the French Capital, and for ten days Paris seemed to move out and those that remained spent restless days and sleepless nights. Yet Paris is unharmed and unafraid. She has learned to hear the shriek of the siren and to sleep on. For a while she listened to the beating of the drum telling that the long-range gun was in action, and then she laughed the drummer from the streets. A shell fell upon a worshiping congregation and seventy people were killed. That was a German victory! A bomb fell upon a maternity hospital and the list of dead included a nurse, two mothers, and a little child just born. That is the way Germany is conquering Paris. Next day a French newspaper published these defiant lines entitled "Victory."

"Across the plains of Picardy
Proud Amiens flings her taunt at thee,
Bidding thee tame her if thy will
Transcends the faith that lights her still.

A line of freemen bars the way
Where all thy legions lunge and sway
And wither into shadow. Where
Is any show of triumph there?

"But dare man say that all thy pain
Is bootless, all thine effort vain?
That all thy trafficking in life
Through four black years of frustrate strife
Has gained thee nothing but a curse?
The list of dead includes a nurse,
Two mothers, and a new-born child.

"The murder of the undefiled,
The random slaughter of the weak—
What greater triumphs wouldst thou seek?"

We saw those wonderful French armies moving up to battle. They came from the South and from the West, but mostly from the East—from East of Rheims and beyond Verdun, leaving our men to man the lines. They came by trains that passed us every seven minutes, loaded in cattle cars, forty men to the car. Every seven minutes a military train passed with men and war materials and mounted machine guns ready for action, and every half-hour a hospital train equipped with operating cars and doctors and nurses went by, to return in a few days with its load of shattered and wounded humanity. They came in trucks, long lines of automobiles moving quickly over those wonderful French roads, with guns and ammunition, with food and men. They came in troops of cavalry over the dusty roads, messing by the side of

the railroad, and climbing down over the bank to secure the French newspaper which we threw from the train telling them of the tidings of battle. There seemed to be no end to the line of march, no limit to the men France had to pour in to stem that German advance. One wonders whether more to admire the soldiers or the mothers and fathers and sweethearts who bade them goodbye. Those soldiers, who had seen two, three, and four years of war, waved their goodbyes to the French peasants who threw them a flower or a kiss and listened to the ringing confidence with which they called back *"Comptez sur nous,"* and count on them they did. Soon we heard that the German armies had come to a standstill.

I was in a British base camp when the drive was on. I saw many of the 33,000 wounded British Tommies who were brought into the base hospital within the limit of a week and saw the forwarding of numbers of these to Channel ports for embarkation to "Blighty," in order to make room for the wounded fresh from the battle front. I shall never forget those hospital trains, car after car, and those ambulances with four men in each, lying so silent and so still, with four pairs of stockinged feet resting now from the battle, but resting perhaps in agony and pain. Then I went into the "Y" hut, where the comrades of those wounded men, who had come safely through the fight, had returned for a three days' leave, and in the twilight those boys who had faced death and hell were quietly singing together some of the old songs of love and home. They were sitting on those narrow backless

benches and singing from the stereopticon screen on which the words of the song had been printed. It was easy to tell where their thoughts were, for they were singing not the ragtime melodies which we associate with soldier life, but those old songs that have ploughed their way into the heart of humanity, and this is the favorite song those boys whose hearts were at home, sang:

"When the golden sun sinks in the hills,
And the toil of a long day is o'er—
Though the road may be long, in the lilt of a song
I forgot I was weary before.
Far ahead, where the blue shadows fall,
I shall come to contentment and rest;
And the toils of the day will be all charmed away
In my little grey home in the west.

"There are hands that will welcome me in,
There are lips I am yearning to kiss—
There are two eyes that shine just because they are mine
And a thousand things other men miss.
It's a corner of heaven itself,
Though it's only a tumble-down nest—
But, with love brooding there, why, no place can compare
With my little grey home in the west."

In the morning, with their hearts full of home, they were back in the battle line.

France was calling. England with her back to the wall was calling in the words of General Haig: "There

is no other course open to us but to fight it out; every position must be held to the last man; there must be no retirement." In the battle of Verdun the Germans employed twenty and a half divisions, but in the first German drive of 1918 there were one hundred and twenty-seven divisions and one hundred and two divisions were concentrated against the British line. In April the British officers' casualty list exceeded ten thousand. Yet Britain said, "There must be no retirement." Canada and the heroes of Vimy Ridge were calling. They understood the message that General Curry sent them. "Advance, or fall where you stand, facing the enemy." And, America heard, and America answered.

I never expect to see a nation thrilled as France was thrilled when she read those few brief sentences of General Pershing, which offered the American forces to the Allied nations. I had the honor of lunching with General Pershing the day after, and when I spoke to him of the fine thing he had done, he said, "There was nothing else to do." Then I was told how it had happened. He had gone to the headquarters of General Foch, and, in his democratic, American way, had made the offer to him. Grasping him by the hand, General Foch said to him, "Come and tell the men out here what you have just told me," and leading General Pershing out to where General Pétain and Premier Clémenceau were standing, he said, "Tell these men what you have just told me." Then quietly and in French, General Pershing spoke the words that thrilled them and thrilled France and thrilled America:

"I come to say to you that the American people would hold it a great honor for our troops if they were engaged in the present battle. I ask it of you, in my name and in that of the American people.

"There is at this moment no other question than that of fighting. Infantry, artillery, aviation—all that we have are yours, to dispose of them as you will. Others are coming who are as numerous as will be necessary."

These words thrilled France, and French soldiers everywhere lifted up their heads and hearts. One French soldier pointed to the lines of Pershing's message and said, *"Deuxieme Verdun"* and showed me by his gestures how the Allied armies would twist the Kaiser's neck.

I saw our first division move up. It was a great sight. I journeyed with a French officer who acted as interpreter for our Army. The sight of those American soldiers moving up into that historic battle line marked an epoch in the war. They represented the millions that America was preparing to send to France, and they said to Germany in words that we now may make our own:

"No parleying now—America has all one breath;
We're with you now from shore to shore,
Ye men of ours, 'tis victory or death."

In France two convictions took possession of me. I think they are the convictions which any man will have when he has simplified an intricate situation, and has thought through into the fundamental simplicities and the needs of the hour.

The first conviction is that the first duty of America is to lay aside every other interest and concentrate herself on the winning of this war. Near the front line trenches, the chief of staff of one of our army divisions spoke of the standard of military efficiency which had been set for America. That standard, he said, has been set for us by France. He spoke of the French soldiers, who for nearly four years had been sleeping in French graves. In a little village cemetery on the battlefield of the Marne I counted 125 graves, almost as many graves as there were inhabitants in the village.

The standard has been set for us by Belgium, whose women and children are exiles and whose men have been deported or are clinging to the fifteen-mile strip of homeland that is still theirs.

The standard has been set for us by Britain, with her enduring patience and her great fleet guarding the seas over which our soldiers travel to the battle front, with her cities and colleges robbed of their youth and her soldiers sleeping in foreign soil, her casualty list in 1917 exceeding 800,000, being 500,000 more than the French.

But above all, he said, the standard has been set for us by Germany. It has been set by German efficiency and German strategy and German sacrifice. To underrate or underestimate that German standard will mean our undoing.

It is Germany that has challenged us, and we must match German efficiency and German valor and German arms with American efficiency and American

valor and American arms. And, if Germany can be so powerful, so full of spirit and sacrifice, so defiant of danger and death for an inhuman, damnable, Christless cause, we of America can surpass her in efficiency, in daring, and in defiance of death for a cause that is noble and true and Christlike.

General Pershing's words to us were: "Let us stop talking about reconstruction and about peace and about what will happen after the war is over, and let us see to it that we wage a successful war." This is the military point of view, and however necessary it is to prepare for peace and to be forearmed against the coming of the days of victory, we must gird ourselves for the winning of the victory and to the conviction that victory may be long delayed.

We shall not succeed because of Germany's failure, nor because of Austria's breakdown. We must win, not by our peace talk, but by our arms, and we must succeed not because of the overthrow of Germany's politicians, but because of the overthrow of her army. We demand a victory not based upon a peace pledge, but upon the triumph of our arms. Peace pledges are scraps of paper to Germany.

France is not talking about when the war will end; she is saying to Germany in one voice that this war can end only in her defeat, whether it end this summer or next summer, or the summer five years hence. And America must tell Germany that every month she adds to the war, every crime she adds to crime, and every battle she adds to battle, will make her defeat both more sure and more terribly tragic.

The second conviction which possessed me was one of optimism. We need not worry about the physical and moral condition of our men in France. "Tell them at home," said General Pershing, "not to worry about their boys. They will come home better than when they left." I am not blind to the dangers that exist in France for our men. I think it is possible to over-idealize France. I hope I shall not be misunderstood, but the moral and religious ideas of France are not those of America. France's attitude toward temperance and toward immoral men and women is not our attitude. When in a port city at which our men land there are thousands of licensed prostitutes, how could one who knew these conditions be an idealist? How could one blind his eyes to the dangers that lurk in the way of every American soldier, when he knows that wine is the common beverage in France and that total abstinence is all but an unknown virtue? The moral conditions in France are neither black nor white, and the moral conditions of our American soldiers are neither black nor white. The American soldier is not a saint. He is just a common man. He is much like other soldiers. He can make the words of the British Tommy his own:

"Our padre, 'e says I'm a sinner,
And John Bull says I'm a saint,
And they're both of 'em bound to be liars,
For I'm neither of 'em, I ain't.
I'm a man, and a man's a mixture
Right down from 'is very birth,
For part of 'im comes from heaven,
And part of 'im comes from earth."

The First Contingent of American Soldiers on Leave Arriving at Aix-les-Bains

Nevertheless, man for man, our soldiers are better than they were in civil life, and in integrity and moral purity they hold the best record of any army on earth. I do not say that they do not drink. I can only testify that I did not see a drunken American soldier in France. I do not say that immorality does not exist in the Army. I know that it does. But I do know that conditions are better than they were, and I know that the moral condition of the men is better than it was when they entered the Army. The records are open for all those who wish to read.

After careful investigation of the subject I am convinced that ours is the cleanest army that the world has ever seen. The credit belongs to every one. It belongs to the United States Government, which seeks above all an efficient army. The credit belongs to the officers in charge, who are more interested in their men than any professional investigator can ever be. It belongs greatly to the Y M C A that is doing one of the finest pieces of work in France that the world has ever seen. It belongs to the Red Cross, but primarily, it belongs to the men themselves. They have been lifted out of themselves. They are the new crusaders of the twentieth century. Some of them do not know exactly why they are there. They sing, "We're here because we're here, Because we're here, Because we're here," but they know, all of them know, that they are there for America and for France and for England and for humanity, and they know that they are there to win. They understand the countersign, and have estimated the price they have to pay:

"Who passeth here? We of the new brigade,
Who come in aid, to take your place who fell.
What is the countersign? That we have weighed,
The cost ye paid—yet come!
Pass, all is well."

Said a Frenchman, whose son had been in the army for forty-five months, when asked concerning the fighting qualities of our men, "They fight just like our Blue Devils." That is the highest compliment a Frenchman can pay, and every last man is dissatisfied until he is in the fighting line with his back to the wall and his face to the foe.

The response to religion on the part of the men was something of a surprise to me. I was permitted to speak to thousands of men in France, from the ports of entry to where the singing of the Gospel was accompanied by the sound of the battle, and the religious receptivity of the men increased as I drew nearer to where the guns spoke their tragic message. The great words of our religion—God, Christ, Faith, Hope, Prayer, Immortality, Service, Life, Love, Justice, Duty, and the Cross—are words that against the background of the curtain of fire are luminous with new meaning and the power of a personal appeal. Men are not only receiving the religious message, they are asking for it and demanding it from us. I do not mean that every boy kneels at his bunk; few of them do. I mean that they respond to the thing we call religion. Before you preach you may hear them singing something like this:

"Goodbye, Ma! Goodbye, Pa! Goodbye, mule, with yer old hee-haw!
I may not know what the war's about,
But you bet, by gosh, I'll soon find out.
An' O my sweetheart, don't you fear, I'll bring you a king for a souvenir;
I'll bring you a Turk and a Kaiser, too,
An' that's about all one feller could do!"

They have no use for a religion that is based upon pious platitudes or sentimental exhortations. They do not worship a God who is a pacifist, but one whose "blood-red banner streams afar." They believe in a Christianity like that of Oliver Cromwell, that will not hesitate, if the cause of righteousness demands it, to take the head of a king.

On the battlefields of Europe the channels of new thought and moral conviction are being opened up. Said an American officer to one of our "Y" men on board a transport, "I used to pride myself on being an atheist, but this d—— war has knocked h—— out of my atheism." After a bishop had delivered an address on the subject of German propaganda, a disappointed American lad came to one of my American friends and said, "D—— it, I thought the Bishop was going to give us some religion." The Bishop had often given the men religion, but this boy's expression of his expectation is only a revelation of the fact that a religious message is always welcome on any day and at any place. Instead of the war making for a breakdown of faith and the overthrow of the Church, it has given the Church the greatest opportunity in

human history and enthroned faith above all other virtues.

Then while the guns are playing over their heads, and after they have sung their "Hee-haw songs," you say to the boys, "Well, let's have some hymns. What shall we sing?" Then, unconsciously, they reveal their hearts and they say, "Rock of Ages." They know what it is to have to hide in an *abri* in the side of the hills, and those familiar consecrated words have a new meaning, for they sing them with a sort of a thrill: "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee." Then they want "Jesus, Lover of my Soul." In my snug contentedness, I had often sung it, but it had never had the meaning for me that it had that night under the sound of the guns. "Other refuge have I none." And then they want "Nearer, My God, to Thee." I shall never forget how they sang it. We think we know how to sing it. We think we know how to sing, "E'en though it be a cross." Under the black sky, where you can see the flash of the guns and the star shells burst over your head, or, what is worse under the bright moonlight sky, where the aeroplanes, those messengers of death, hover over your head, you discover what it means to sing "E'en though it be a cross." And then, perhaps most popular of all, they want "Abide with Me."

> "When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
> Help of the helpless, O abide with me."

What other message is there for them or for us? It is a message not of weak despair, but one of a con-

fident and abiding trust. In the midst of human helplessness and in the presence of enshrouding mystery, with their faces toward foe and their hearts set on victory, they sing:

"Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee:
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me."

I think I have seen into the heart of the American soldier, and I know that all is well.

CHAPTER III

BARRACKS AND BILLETS

The American Army is a well-cared-for body of men. One look at an American soldier reveals the fact that he is well fed, well paid, and well housed. The American soldier is a satisfied soldier.

Writing back from France to his mother, one of the more-than-a-million now in France furnishes first hand testimony to the efficiency of American barracks and billets overseas.

"When I entered the service I was fat, just plain loose flesh, that was only a burden to carry around. I lost thirty pounds before I had been over here a month. Since, I have regained it, but it is no longer fat nor a burden. Instead, it is muscle and is used about seven days a week, for the purpose of making the world safe for Democracy. Work never hurt anybody, and I am proud to say that I am a member of the Fifteenth U. S. Engineers, and am able to work. Trusting that you are well, I am,

Your loving son."

The British Army is housed in tents; their base camps are great tent cities. In the morning sun, they are most impressive. The camp is a city in khaki. The streets are named after the familiar thoroughfares of London or the towns and villages of the soldiers' homeland.

One comes upon Piccadilly and the Strand, upon Russell Square and Downing Street. There is a touch of familiarity and friendliness and withal a prophecy of permanency about it all.

In the tent city one finds much that he finds at home, with the military purpose always evident. Twenty or thirty Y M C A centers furnish entertainment and social and religious opportunity. The Church of England, not fully satisfied with the religious opportunities furnished by the "Y," has equipped a hut where the Altar is always awaiting the penitent and the man of prayer.

The Army Canteen, both wet and dry, is thronged with men, going forward to, or returning from, the battle.

I was charmed with the Hospitality House of the Y M C A which is operated by the splendid English women who have made such a success of the Woman's Department. This place of retreat in the midst of the busy camp is prepared against the day when in the hospital a lad wounded sorely, or perhaps dying, reaches out his hand for home, and by permission of the authorities, father or mother, wife or sweetheart, hurries in the night across the channel to watch for an hour beside his bed and to find a welcome in this home among the tents.

Flowers are in the garden, and the touch of womanhood everywhere: the very pictures on the walls speak of home and hope. It struck me as one of the most Christlike and beautiful of all the things I saw in France.

The American Army lives either in barracks or in billets. Few tents are in use. Sometimes a company will sleep in the open on the banks of a French river, but they are on their way to more permanent quarters.

The barracks in France are constructed after the design which has become familiar to us in our great American cantonments. In this, we have followed the French system. Sometimes our armies occupy barracks formerly occupied by the French, and sometimes in the same camp both French and American soldiers are quartered.

The building is long and narrow, with beds along each wall and an aisle down the center. The mess halls are similarly constructed and the entire camp is equipped with electric light and running water. The officers' barracks are divided into little rooms, perhaps ten feet square, open at the top, the hallway running through the center between the rooms back to the mess hall. In each room, there is a little stove, and at night happiness and contentment reign.

The French climate tests the enduring qualities of our men. Not so rigorous as our winter, the French cold, nevertheless, penetrates to the very heart, and no quantity of army blankets suffices to satisfy. Of course the hardened soldier has a fire always burning in his own warm blood, but notwithstanding all the heroism of army life, a fire is the most welcome friend in France.

One night, I stepped into the headquarters of a company of the 15th Engineers. This company was sepa-

rated from the rest of the regiment, and the men were drawn into the closest kind of good comradeship because of the fewness of their numbers. The mornings and nights of February were cold and desolate and the chill crept down by thrills, and settled in the warm woollen socks knitted by loving hands.

In the barracks, these boys had a stove, and around it in the evenings they gathered and discussed all things in and out of the universe and usually broke up in a row. In the morning, they found themselves ranged in their usual places around the stove and new subjects and new contestants were ready to enter the field.

The boys were organized and called themselves "The Stove League." They had a President, Donovan, and a General Supervisor, Crux, and when I stumbled in upon them and was welcomed as one from home, they were all at a standstill over the interpretation of the thirteenth chapter of the Book of Revelation. Crux had insisted and argued for weeks that the Book of Revelation clearly outlined the progress of the great war, identified the Beast in the Kaiser, and determined that the war would end in forty-two months as foretold in the fifth verse. The forty-two months would be up on the 26th of February, and now the day was the 28th, and prophecy and the Bible had both fallen to the ground. It was like coming into a sort of Prophetic Conference.

I would give much to have a photograph of that group at headquarters that night. The boys sat on beds, on the floor, on chunks of wood, on boxes, but

all around the stove, and taps sounded before the Bible class broke up.

I told them that the Book of Revelation was written for days like these, and that in those days power was in the hands of tyranny. The tyrant's name was Cæsar and the modern spelling is Kaiser. I told them that the book was written in a peculiar symbolic language, so that those who understood would know and those who did not possess the key would pass it by as meaningless. I told them that it contained only one message and that was to the effect that however sore the trial, and however hot the fire of persecution, even though death should result, yet faith was bound to triumph and God would have the last word. Then we saw that the message of the book was timeless and had little to do with dates and names and numbers, but had everything to do with comfort and hope and courage, for through the ruin and the desolation, we see a new heaven and a new earth. We instinctively felt that we were not alone in the experience of disaster and war's desolation and that they who sang their new song in the Book of Revelation would not sing alone, for we too would join in the chorus, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

The majority of the men of the American Army are not in barracks, but in billets. They are billeted in the villages and towns of France. The army authorities, assisted by the French Government, set apart an area covering perhaps a dozen or more French villages, and in that area, perhaps ten or twenty miles across, a whole army division of 26,000 men will be

billeted. This necessitates the breaking up of the division into separate units, ranging from a few hundred to two or three thousand men. Before the soldiers arrive, billeting officers make a thorough canvass of the situation and every available space is secured and the number of men assigned to each barn, shed, public hall, courtyard, and home is definitely determined.

It is not difficult to understand how monotony creeps into the life of our men so situated. They do not know the French language, there are no pastimes, no libraries, no movies, no newspapers, and except for the service of the "Y" no provision is made for recreation and amusement. The men of France between eighteen and fifty have all gone to war and only the women, the children, and men unfit for military duty are left. The work of the Army and of the Y M C A becomes in circumstances such as these both more necessary and more difficult.

The Army has accomplished marvelous things and the sanitary conditions of our American camps in France are as perfect as American science can make them. France has been both surprised and charmed at the dispatch with which villages and whole sections of territory have been made fitter places to live in. A French Protestant clergyman, Pastor R. Saillens, expressed to me the conviction that the American Army had in a few days been able to cleanse and purify the life of French communities where for a generation the French Government had only imperfectly succeeded.

Thousands of soldiers live on trains. They travel from port to camp, and from camp to camp. They eat and sleep during the days they are en route in the railroad cars which are designated to hold eight horses or forty men. It takes as much heroism on a frosty morning to wash with water from a cold canteen water bottle as it does to go over the top in December weather. We saw boys pouring water into the hands of other lads while they held their heads out of the car door. We said, "Where are you going?" "To h——," came the quick and hearty response. We got even by asking, "How would you like some buttered toast and coffee?" They came back with the challenge, "Do you want to get shot?"

Good cheer is welcome, but when it is accompanied with good chocolate it is better. When those boys landed at their destination a few hours later they found that the "Y" had preceded them and was ready with steaming caldrons of hot chocolate to satisfy their physical and social need. Their greeting, "Gee, here's the old 'Y'" is high commendation from the Army.

There are always thousands of men and officers who are temporarily located in Paris, in port cities, and in headquarters' centers. For these men the Y M C A has, with wise foresight, provided hotels and club rooms for officers and privates. The eleven hotels managed by the "Y" for the use of American soldiers and sailors have fully justified themselves under the wise oversight of Frederic B. Shipp. They practically carry themselves financially, and their popularity is

evidenced by the fact that rooms are engaged by officers weeks in advance.

In these officers' hotels and clubs, we found library and canteen facilities, with music and a wholesome homelike American atmosphere. In these centers American women are helping as Y M C A Secretaries, and their presence has added both charm and cheer to thousands of our men. These hotels and clubs are under army regulations and are provided with army fare. This means not restriction but liberty, for in Paris they are the only places where our men can secure white bread, butter, sugar, and the little delicacies that American men like. The service carried on for the officers in hut and club and hotel is perhaps the most appreciated of all the activities for which the Y M C A has made itself responsible.

Like the martyrs of old, our men live also in "dens and caves of the earth." In trench and dugout, in caves along the road and in the hills, in shelves along the side of the trench, sleeping behind damp gas-sheltering canvas, they live their lives and win their victories.

One dark night with the shells screaming over us and the star-shells lighting up "No Man's Land," we asked the boys what they wanted. They said, "Bread and candles." War brings us to the simplicities and what else do men require but "bread" and "light"?

I asked a man who was cleaning his rifle the name of the little village where he and his comrades were billeted. He answered with a surprised look, "Blamed

if I know. I've only been in this crazy place for five days." Tomorrow he was gone to find quarters in another village.

Ours is a mobile army. In sixty days one of our army divisions of 26,000 men was encamped in five different places 150 miles apart. No wonder mail addressed to P. O. 709 was delayed.

One of our camp areas covers a territory 250 by 150 miles. The Y M C A, following the advice of the army authorities, projected thirteen huts in one section of that area, to find after the work was completed that the army plans had been suddenly changed. Such experiences, however, belong to the fortunes of war.

The road that leads into the city of Verdun is called "The Holy Road." It is not a long road. It winds over hills and along valleys from Bar le Duc to Verdun. When the Crown Prince massed his twenty army divisions against the French, he destroyed the main line of communication leading into the city. The evidence of that reign of terror is everywhere evident. A French officer pointed out a bridge a few miles behind the city, near which a German shell fell every fifteen seconds for days at a time, and yet amid ruin and desolation the bridge was not destroyed.

Not far from Verdun, in a cemetery that seemed no larger than the ground covered by an ordinary church building, 5,000 French soldiers lay buried. It had looked as if Verdun would fall, for the only railroad that led into the city was a narrow road over which it took me almost five hours to travel thirty-five miles.

Into the city, however, ran a splendid highway, and over the road the reserves of France traveled. Every day for three months 12,000 trucks went forward, loaded with men and ammunition and food, and every day for three months 12,000 trucks returned, loaded with wounded or wearied men. If a truck failed to move, it was quickly cast aside and the great, grey endless procession moved on. Over that highway more men went forward never to return, than over any other road in the world's history. This is why the French people speak of it today in hushed voices as "The Holy Road."

Every road in France and every road that leads to France is a holy road. Most of our boys that travel over those highways with songs of rejoicing, will come back to us again. Some will never come back, but all of them must know that with them we, too, have traveled.

We can do this by furnishing and equipping the army agencies which follow them right up to the very front. The Red Cross and the Y M C A are out upon these holy roads and must be furnished and equipped with men and women, for they, too, claim the right to the road.

We do not dare to send our Army and our Navy out into danger without following them to the victorious end, and for the welfare service thousands of men and women are needed. They are needed to relieve the strain upon the workers—all too few—who are now in France. They are needed to fill gaps caused by death, for the Red Triangle and the Red

Cross have no place in their ranks for the pacifist or the slacker. Many workers are in France for limited terms of service and their places must be filled. Men and women who can find no place in the ranks of the military must go, in order to keep faith with themselves and to live on good terms with themselves after the war is past.

It is to this challenge that Rudyard Kipling refers in his verses, "The American Spirit Speaks":

"But after the fires and the wrath,
But after searching and pain,
His Mercy opens us a path
To live with ourselves again."

CHAPTER IV

PLAYING THE GAME

Every man who enters one of the British Y M C A huts comes face to face with the words:

"Live clean."
"Talk clean."
"Fight clean."
"Play the game."

For four years the British Tommy has fought clean and played the game.

The motto appeals to our American boys. They have come at a rather late hour upon the battle field of France, but they have come determined to live clean, to talk clean, to fight clean, and to play the game.

The American soldier in France has long ceased to be a novelty. The nations that mingle in France have become accustomed to the uniform of the United States soldier. People are still tremendously interested in him. Little children gather around him and are proud to be spoken to. French soldiers are always eager to welcome and converse with him and everywhere he has been given the right of way in France.

But the thrill is over, the thrill of those first days. A young lad from Alabama told me of the stirring days when they marched through the streets of Paris. Those days can never be repeated, and now troops land

as if they were arriving at one of our own American ports. This same lad from Alabama had driven a motorcycle from the port of entry to headquarters. He passed through a French town where a man in a silk hat waved at him and afterwards followed him to the next town on a bicycle. The man with the silk hat was the Mayor of the village through which the American soldier had passed without ceremony. The soldier was taken back to the Mayor's town; received by the Mayor's family; entertained at dinner, and when he returned to his motorcycle he found that the children of the village had filled the side seat of his motorcycle with French flowers. Those days are gone. Today American soldiers are everywhere. They are in the port cities; along the highways; in little villages; on the Swiss border; in the valleys of the French Alps; along the shores of the English Channel, and in the words of General Pershing:

"Others will come as numerous as may be needed."

How distinguished they look! It is not the uniform that distinguishes them, for in some respects the American uniform is less attractive than the uniform of other nations. It lacks the touch of beauty and personality of the French and it lacks the comfort of the British and the dash of the Colonial. It is their straightness, their strength, their manliness, that distinguishes them. An English officer who had watched them enter France said to me that they looked just as the Canadians looked four years ago, fresh and vigorous and forward-looking. There was a touch of pathos in his voice as he thought of the hardships

through which the Canadians had come before the freshness of youth had been changed into the ruggedness of experience.

The thing that impressed me about the American soldier was his abounding vitality. He was always doing something and planning something. He was always on the move. Whatever his work, he was always chafing under restraint. His first question was, "How near are we to the front?" After he has been in France for a month or six weeks he will say to you in an apologetic tone, "It isn't my fault that I am not under shell fire."

A young Lieutenant who speaks excellent French, and for that reason has been attached to the General Staff, told me that he lay awake every night trying to scheme out some way by which he could get up under the sound of the guns. Even the men and women of the Y M C A grow restless in the necessary service of the rear and demand to be sent into the danger zone.

When the French turned over the Lorraine front to our boys, things had been quiet along the line for months. I was told the Germans felt free to walk at ease in No Man's Land and that no shots were fired between the contending forces. They were content to hold the trenches awaiting developments elsewhere. Our boys went into the trenches in the night. Next morning the Hun went out for his usual walk on the parapet and received a baptism of fire. Since then there has always been something doing. The French were disturbed at first and thought the Americans had

spoiled everything, and had stirred up for themselves, and for them, a hornet's nest. But the Germans have had to strengthen their lines there and have been given no peace day nor night.

If the boys are not in actual warfare, they are up to American pranks. They load a piece of wire with a weight of iron and then in the night one of the boys slips out into No Man's Land and throws the heavy end over the German wire entanglements and goes back to the trench. Then they pull, and the grinding, scraping noise of the wire causes "Fritz" to throw up star-shells to see where the enemy is and what is going on in his entanglements. The colored men have the same spirit. They were in the front line, brigaded with French troops, in the hills, and in the swamp protected by a maze of trenches and a maze of wire. Harry Lauder asked one of the English Tommies how long the war would last. "Forty years," he said. Astonished at the answer, he asked the reason for his pessimism. "Oh," said Tommy, "it will take a year to finish the war and then it will take thirty-nine years to wind up the wire." He was thinking of those miles and miles and miles of barbed wire entanglements.

One night the Captain of a colored company asked for six volunteers from his colored troops to reconnoiter in No Man's Land; instead of six, every man in the company stepped forth for duty. "Tell the Hun," said one of the colored men, "that the black man has come and the German has got to leave." Speaking in the tent one night one of the Y M C A

Secretaries was saying that that very night—it was the crisis of the first German drive—hundreds of British and French soldiers were dying on the battlefield and he hoped thousands of Germans. He sort of hedged when he made that statement and went back over it to explain just what he meant, but one of the men in the audience cried out, "Oh, never mind, that is what we are here for, to kill the Hun." They don't ask you over there how long the war will last. Our boys in France are saying, "I hope the war will not end until I get a chance at the front." That is the spirit of the American soldier and though at times the thought of home pulls hard, he does not intend to come back until he comes with bands playing and banners waving.

These men of ours have not wasted their youth. They have had their youth, and now in these days of testing they stand the strain. They contrast favorably with the men of other nations. They are more vivacious, they laugh more, they play more. The little children of France fall in love with them and like their fun and merriment. They walk with them on the street, hand in hand, and are instinctively drawn to them. Kipling once, thinking about the youth of his nation, wrote:

> "The Lamp of our Youth will be utterly out:
> But we shall subsist on the smell of it."

One has only to look at a regiment of American soldiers to understand that the lamp of youth has never gone out, and that the ardor and strength of young manhood is strong upon our men, and, because of their

past well-living and well-doing they have a reserve strength to fall back upon.

The fine spirit that possesses our men comes down to them in a manner from the officers. Our men are well officered. The message of General Pershing to our American men hangs in all our Y M C A buildings in France.

"TO THE AMERICAN SOLDIER

Hardship will be your lot, but trust in God will give you comfort. Temptation will befall you, but the teachings of our Saviour will give you strength. Let your valor as a soldier and your conduct as a man be an inspiration to your comrades and an honor to your country. —Pershing."

When the first American troops entered France, General Pershing welcomed them in these words:

"You are now in France, to expel an enemy that has invaded this beautiful land. Your first duty is to fight against this foe, and protect our Ally. You are here also to lift a shield above the poor and weak. You will be kind, therefore, to the aged and the invalid. You will be courteous to all women, and never have so much as an evil thought in your mind. You will be very tender and gentle with little children. You will do well, therefore, to forswear the use of all liquors. You will do your duty like brave men. Fear God. God have you in his keeping."

Compare this with the Kaiser's charge to his soldiers about to sail for China in 1900:

"When you meet the foe you will defeat him. No quarter will be given, no prisoners will be taken. Let

all who fall into your hands be at your mercy. Just as the Huns one thousand years ago under Attila gained reputation, so may the name of Germany become known in such a manner in China that no Chinaman will ever again dare to look askance at a German."

In an obscure corner of France where a regiment of our soldiers was stationed, I found a copy of an order posted for Company M, of the 161st Infantry. Here it is:

"Sunday being a day of rest and meditation, when every American can worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, a portion of the day cannot be spent in a more reverent manner than by writing a letter home to your mother, or, if she is not living, then to your next of kin.

"Remember that your mother is the one who is brave, not you. She is the one who is carrying the cross. You are uppermost in her thoughts all the time and she is praying for your safe return. Gladden her heart by writing to her regularly.

"David Livingstone,
"Captain 161st Infantry."

This fine spirit possessed by the officers is reflected in the men. There are officers in the American Army who are acting as real chaplains to their men. One of the officers, a Colonel with whom we were lunching, and at whose table the officers bowed their heads while prayer was offered for the camp and for the men, handed us these verses which had been written by one of his own men, a private in the Quartermaster's De-

partment, and which he carried around with him, apparently prouder of them than if he had written them himself.

"He swore his oath as a soldier should
With eyes steadfast and loyal:
He sold his hopes of a life of ease,
For a soldier's lonely toil.
He said goodbye to the girl at home,
And left her proud and sad;
And went away to play his part,
In a world gone stark mad.

"Oh, never were hopes as high as his
Or never were aims so dear:
The trenches had no horrors for him
And hungry guns no fear.
But he did not know that the risks of war
Are not confined to the line,
And he fell for a pair of painted cheeks
And a belly of vixen wine.

"He couldn't see that the harm he did
Was not to himself alone,
And he bartered the best of his life away
Like a dog for a poisoned bone.
He didn't go to the trenches,
For he bore the marks of Eve,
But they sent him home with a Medical D.D.
For his friends to see and grieve.

"Did he go back to the girl he left behind?
Does a burnt cur slink to the fire?
No! he dropped from the ken of decent men
To the depths of souls for hire.

So this is the law of the God of war,
Ye men who have heard the call,
The Hun is bad, but a painted face
Is the wickedest foe of all."

The alertness and vitality of the men in the Army is the reflection of the soul of the American nation. As the nation goes, so goes the Army. The Army is the apex of the pyramid which rests upon the great enduring foundation of the nation. The Army is the keen cutting edge of the wedge whose driving power comes from the bulk of the nation's strength. The Army can never be beaten so long as the nation is strong. This war has become a spiritual and a moral struggle. If the men at the front are to play the game, it is necessary that the men and women at home learn to play the game also. Not until Germany destroyed the soul of Russia did she win a victory over Russian armies. I saw Italian soldiers working on the roads in France—soldiers that had been pushed back by the great German drive, but not until the soul of the Italian people had been weakened by German propaganda did the Hun set foot on Italian soil. When the political life of France was weak and uncertain, the French armies wavered and the Somme offensive broke down. When the great smash of the German spring drive came against the armies of Britain more British soldiers fell in a single week than had ever fallen during a similar period at any time in her great history. And it was only because the heart of the nation was sound that the Army stood like a wall of

steel against the enemy. As long as the nation is true, the Army will never fail.

The men who represent us in France will play the game, but they cannot play it without us. If the nation at home is weak, the Army will be weak. If the nation is hesitant, the Army will be hesitant, but if the nation is self-reliant and strong and victorious, the Army will be strong, defiant of death, and triumphant. It is because the soul of the American nation is true and strong and victorious that it will not tolerate any form of political profiteering while the war is on.

A young lad of the Navy just in from sea said to me, "War is a mighty strange thing and America is going to gain just what Germany wanted to gain." He had thought things out for himself and he had come to the conclusion that in commerce and trade, and in the markets of the world, America had found her place among the nations. And then he said, "Of course it's mighty fortunate that we will be the victors and not Germany." And in the back of his mind I knew what he was thinking about. He was thinking of the victory not only of armies but of ideas, not of the sword only but also of the spirit.

The American soldier is his own best interpreter. Here is a letter from one of them:

"April 22nd, 1918.

Dearest ————:

Was delighted about Roy and wish him the best of luck with my sincerest congratulations. Am proud of him and I know you will always be from now on. It

doesn't matter so much what the service is, but there's a niche for every man in this stunt, and he ought to fill it when he can be relieved of domestic obligations, as in Roy's case. Then besides, wouldn't the poor devil have an awful time trying to explain to posterity that his wife wouldn't let him serve his country? Parental love is ruthlessly disregarded and magnificently submerged in the patriotism of this great event, so why should not marital happiness take a back seat for a time being? Change the 'I' to make it 'martial,' and you will find that selfishness will give place to service and self-sacrifice, and thereby you will breathe deeper, for your spirit will be liberated and your soul will go on a regular spree. Take that from me, for I'm 'Jake' and I know. 'Jake' means 'just right' in the army, and our up-to-date Y M C A pastor gave the men a sermon last night on the text: 'Are you Jake?' which means, 'Are you at peace with yourself?' and I have found out that I am. Strangely enough, too, I never really understood that feeling before, nor do I know why I have come by it recently. I used to be a little bit worried now and then about getting through it all, and often wished I could be back home with you all once more.

You see the whole big idea spells SERVICE. I never knew the full meaning of that word before and the glorious feeling of standing ready to give everything and ask nothing in return—not blind, but unquestioning service to our country, to humanity, and to God. That isn't meant as oratory, either, for I know that a thousand like myself would scarcely cause a ripple on this sea, but the biggest sacrifice that any one could make wouldn't be too much to ask with a beast overrunning the world, would it? We Americans are a great and glorious people, and, thank God, we are finding ourselves.

Don't worry about me at all. The Boche has had

three or four awfully good chances to get me, and he hasn't yet. Besides, the American troops will be pulling a lot of spectacular stuff from now on, I imagine, and, if every time you hear of their being in a bit of a smash, you imagine that I am in it, you will just be overwhelming yourself with a lot of unnecessary worries.

I've got a dandy chance of getting through it all, perhaps without a scratch, and even if I don't, I'm Jake—See!

Fondly,

Henry."

One day in France I stood in a cathedral back of the fighting line. Its windows had been shattered by shells and the beautiful building was open to rain and sun. I was alone and waited in the silence of the great building for a moment of quiet. While I was waiting a soldier entered, a soldier in blue, a young man not yet twenty-five. He took a seat near the front and worshiped with bowed head. A moment after a woman, veiled and in deep mourning, took her place near the rear, and, she too, bowed in worshiping silence. What a picture it made—a cathedral, shattered by the shells of war—a woman with a surrendered past, with love and hope lying buried in a trench grave where her boy lay sleeping—and then, beside her in the House of God, youth consecrating itself to the hopes and dreams of tomorrow! It is only when we stand in the presence of the eternal that dreams take the form of reality even in the midst of the tragedy of war. We see in the night and in the darkness the flash of the sword of victory.

"Dreamer of dreams? We take the taunt with gladness,
Knowing that God, beyond the years you see,
Has wrought the dreams that count with you for madness
Into the substance of the world to be."

CHAPTER V

THE HEART OF THE CAMP

The heart of the camp is a hut. The hut is headquarters for the men of the Army. Millions of men pass through the door of the Y M C A hut to the front line trenches. The hut is part of the equipment for war. It is a war measure. It is in France to help win the war. Napoleon said, "Morale is to other features in war as three to one," and the Y M C A is in France to help the American Army reach the highest point of efficiency.

The sign of the Red Triangle has become part of the scenery of France. To Frenchmen the triangle is the sign of the Masonic Order, but the Red Triangle with the letters Y M C A speaks a unique language and proclaims the message of Christianity. The Triangle represents the application of religion to the whole man—body, mind, and spirit.

The representatives of the Association during a recent visit to Italy found the King, Victor Emmanuel, established near the front in a small and plainly furnished soldier's barracks. After the polite Italian presentation the King asked the significance of the Red Triangle on the sleeve of the Y M C A uniform. Dr. John R. Mott took time to explain.

"This side of the Triangle," he said, "represents

The First Y M C A Field Center in France, Opened July, 1917

the body. We try to minister to the health of the soldiers. We believe that a sound, healthy physique makes for military efficiency and so our athletic department initiates games and sports and out-of-door exercises."

"This side of the Triangle," he continued, "represents the mind. Men cannot live by bread alone and the 'Y' seeks to feed the mind by furnishing the men with libraries, lectures, magazines, and inspirational addresses. The Triangle also speaks of the things of the spirit. The Y M C A serves in the name of Him who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

This gave Dr. Mott an opportunity to point out that the entire work of the Association was motived by the Gospel and that this was the way the Christian churches of America were relating themselves to the men of the Army.

The King was interested, and Dr. Mott was grateful for his opportunity.

The first hut in France was a tent. It was donated by the women of the "Twentieth Century Club" of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Association has now nearly 900 centers with our American Army in France, and 600 points of contact with the French Army. The huts in the French Army are built and equipped by the French Government and are manned by a French Director and an American Secretary. The French huts are called *Foyer du Soldats*. The American hut may be an *abri* tent which will take care of a hundred or two hundred men; it may be a school house or a

hall or the *Hôtel de Ville* obtained from a French village where the troops are billeted; it may be a dugout or a cellar in a destroyed and abandoned town near the front, or it may be the standard single or double frame hut erected for the purpose.

In each standard hut there is an audience room used for lectures and moving picture exhibitions at night, for writing and reading room during the day, for church on Sunday. At one end is a platform with a piano and a victrola and with a table or desk for a pulpit. The allied flags are draped behind the platform and on the walls American Liberty Loan and French government posters give a touch of beauty to the interior. At the end opposite the platform is the canteen, where the men can secure the little things all soldiers need. Around the walls near the windows or in the center of the room are benches and tables with ink and pens. Letter paper is furnished free at the counter. Behind the canteen may be two or more rooms used by the Secretaries for bedrooms or offices. If the hut is double, there is a second large audience room. It may be equipped as a lounge room, with a separate apartment for the officers, furnished with chairs, tables, books, magazines, and a fireplace. Both audience rooms can be thrown open and a packed house welcomes a distinguished guest, a French officer, a minstrel show, a boxing match, or a visiting clergyman.

In the beautifully appointed and tastefully furnished hut in one of the aviation camps a tablet tells of the love that made such provision for the boys.

The words of the tablet speak a message of splendid heroism:

To the
Happy Memory
of Pilot
William Henry Meeker
Corporal
In the Foreign Legion
This Y. M. C. A. Hut
is Dedicated
Died Sept. 11, 1917
Aged 23

The hut is the heart of the camp. In the hut the boys meet their friends, write their letters, play their games, exchange photographs, read the current magazines, secure their copy of the *Stars and Stripes,* the *Daily Mail,* or the Paris edition of the *New York Herald.* In the hut they get their baseball and bat, basketball, boxing gloves, a cup of chocolate and a sandwich from one of the Y M C A women, an apple or an orange, dates and figs, cigarettes, and tooth paste.

In one of the port cities of France five American lads, strangely dressed, were inquiring their way to the hut. They were neither in sailor costume nor soldier uniform. There was nothing to distinguish them. They came into the hut for a few cigarettes and a little chocolate. After their wants had been supplied, they sat down in a corner in quiet content. We watched them and wondered where they belonged, and then, after a few moments of friendly conversation, they told their story. They had just come in

from sea. Their boat had been torpedoed and they had been picked up by an English patrol boat. Their ship had sunk in less than five minutes and seven of a crew of thirty-eight had been drowned. One of the five had been torpedoed six times, twice in one day, and he told how in his dreams he had been three nights in the water, and yet he was all eager to return to the sea again. Instinctively they had sought the "Y," which ministered to their bodily comfort, and to them it was a haven of peace.

No department store carries on more multiplied activities. The "Y" furnishes paper and envelopes, pens and ink. It gives a warm place by the fire, perhaps the only cosy spot in the camp. It cashes Army checks when banks refuse, and when the boys run out of money it takes their I. O. U. It supplies tobacco, which seems to be the first requisite of the soldier and the sailor, and matches which seem to be the second requisite. I was told that at one time the "Y" had in its possession one-third of all the matches in France. Next to tobacco come New Testaments and chocolate, chewing gum and peanuts, oranges and apples, figs and dates, soap and candles, hymn books and crackers.

The following statement by the War Council concerning shipments to France during the first year contains interesting information:

"In addition to the enormous quantities of cigars, cigarettes, and canned fruit sent to France, the constantly expanding needs of the American Overseas forces had dictated up to March 31, the shipment by

the Y M C A of 2,578 cases of biscuits, 230,724 pounds of cocoa, 374,605 pounds of coffee, 446,208 cans of condensed milk, 193,483 sacks of flour, and 90 cases of coughdrops. In addition to shipping across 331,446 pounds of chocolate, the Y M C A takes the entire output of three factories in France, an average of 1,000 tons of bar-chocolate a month.

Athletic goods by the ton were sent over, among the principal items being 1,271 cases of material, including baseballs, basket balls, indoor baseballs, boxing gloves, footballs, baseball gloves, masks, and pads, medicine balls, soccer balls, volley balls, playground balls, and punching bags.

To provide soldiers with writing material for the letters home, the Y M C A in this period shipped 360,000,000 sheets of writing paper and envelopes to France. The varying needs of the soldiers were reflected in the shipments of 34,760 cans of jams, 3,295,735 pounds of sugar, 274 chests of tea, 21,000 phonograph records, 350 talking machines, 621,212 pounds of chewing tobacco, 643,040 pounds of smoking tobacco, and 204,480 tubes of tooth paste.

For the entertainment of the American boys in the war zone, the Y M C A shipped approximately 1,000,000 feet of motion picture film, as well as a full complement of projecting machines and motion picture accessories. In addition, the organization sent over thousands of blankets, scores of lighting plants, hundreds of thousands of razors and blades, as well as shaving soap, toilet soap, soda fountain syrup, automobile tools, stereopticon slides and sundries, automobile parts, and tires."

In one shipment to France the following items appeared on the bill of lading: 4,000,000 letter heads and envelopes; 144,000 pens and penholders; 75 mov-

ing picture machines; 60 tons of chocolate; 1 carload of condensed milk; 1 carload of canned "hot dogs"; 125 talking machines with 6,000 records; 55 tons of sugar; 75 tons of flour; 20 tons of soap; 10,000 song books; 30,000 copies of Scripture.

The "Y" has become one of the world's greatest business corporations. It is a corporation with a soul. The hut takes the place of church, club, store, but most of all, of home.

When I was speaking one day to the Army from the text, "What is your life?" the boys were asked to fill in their own answer, and the first answer that came back was "Home." This is the word that counts for most in the Army. A piece of writing paper left on the desk in a hut with the words "My dear Margaret" is typical of the attitude of the Army. Millions of letters home testify to the value of the hut in the life of the soldier. I brought home from the front hundreds of messages for the friends and parents of the boys I met in France. Here are some of the expressions scribbled upon scraps of paper, backs of envelopes, or on a page out of a boy's notebook.

"I only want to tell you that I am perfectly well and I am thinking of you all at home, and wish many times that I was over there with you."

"Father and Mother: Everything going all right."

"Dear Mother and All: Just a line to let you know I'm well and send my love to all. Lovingly, your son."

"Tell Mother I'm getting along fine."

"Corporal George McG. sends love to his mother, also to Miss Helen."

"Will you kindly remember me to the girls of the Fifth Avenue Dormitory? I shall never forget your message?"

"Tell him you saw me. I was feeling fine and that I hope some day to see him again."

"Tell her you saw me. I was feeling fine and through you send my love and best wishes."

"Tell Mother I am sending this message with the Y M C A man. I am O. K. Your son."

"Love to yourself and baby. All's well. I'm glad to be where I am. Love. Everything O. K."

"Tell them I'm going good. From her son Archie."

The last Sunday I was in France was Mother's Day. All over France the boys in the Army were celebrating. American homes know that thousands of messages came over the wire, and it is the "Y" that plans and makes all this possible.

The Mother's Day program sent out to the boys in every hut contained this ideal mother's letter:

"My dear Boy:

Your father says to tell you that he will give his son to his country, but that he will be—(never mind what) if he will give all his new suspenders. He says you pinched three pairs from the top drawer of his bureau—he adds that he 'is onto your curves.' Nora says you were very wise to take them, and she would give you *all* of her's, if she had any. Betty says to tell you that she hears Jack Ellis sails next week—I know just how his mother will feel for those ten days while he is crossing. But she wouldn't have him stay at home, any more than I would have had you. All

the same, she won't have a good night's sleep until she hears he has landed. I keep thinking what a different world it will be to mothers, when you all come marching home again.

And when you do come marching home—old fellow, bring me back the same boy I gave my country, true and clean, and gentle, and brave. You must do this for your father and me and Betty and Nora—and most of all for the daughter you will give me one of these days. Dear, I don't know whether you have ever met her yet—but never mind that. Live for her, or if God wills, die for her—but do either with courage, with honor and clean mirth. But I know you will come back to me—

Mother."

Glimpses of the work carried on by the men and women in the service of the Y M C A may be obtained from the following letters. The first refers to one of many similar services performed by clergymen serving as "Y" Secretaries.

"Office of the Attending Surgeon.
U. S. T. P., P. O. 702,
April 18, 1918.

From: The Attending Surgeon.
To: Chief Secretary, Y M C A, Paris.
Subject: Rev. Mr. Benedict.

1. On behalf of the Medical Department, U. S. Troops, Paris, it is desired to express our appreciation for the services rendered by the Rev. Mr. Benedict of the Y M C A in visiting a Lieutenant of the Army who was dying of smallpox in one of the French hospitals for contagious diseases. He was informed of the great danger of contracting this disease, but was not at all deterred from his duties.

2. Please accept our sincere thanks for the services rendered by Mr. Benedict in this case.

THOMAS C. AUSTIN,
Major, Medical Corps."

Mr. Benedict stayed with the dying soldier for two hours until he passed out into the quiet and then communicated his message of comfort and hope to the sorrowing parents in America.

The second letter carries a message of Christmas cheer.

"Hut No. 2, Base Camp, No. 1.
December 28, 1917.

Mr. E. C. Carter,
Paris,
My dear Mr. Carter:

It was nearing midnight of Christmas Eve when we first inspected the contents of the three 'Santa Claus sacks' of presents sent us by the Paris office for distribution among the soldier-boys in our encampment; we had just taken part in a real Christian Christmas service of prayer and song and carol and heart-to-heart talks about the man, Jesus Christ; every man present became deeply, intensely and earnestly aware of Him as the Prince of Peace and Leader of Men in all things and at all times, and many have cheered our hearts by speaking to us individually of their feelings of comfort and hope, renewed and reaffirmed. But any weariness that we may have felt after giving of the very depths of our spiritual life, was forgotten in waves of amazement and pleasure that swept over us as we burrowed to the bottoms of those Christmas bags. But we did not then anticipate the joy and fun we were to have the next night when we distributed them at our Christmas tree. We could not retire until we had put up three big packages of

the contents to send off with a company of 250 men who were leaving the camp and would be spending their Christmas in box cars. We added candy, cigarettes, cookies, and cigars for the officers, and then went to our cold cubicles at half after one to dream of the morrow, first setting the alarm at 5.30, that we might be sure to arise in time to deliver the packages before the boys left. We kept our engagement with Santa Claus all right and sent them off with the 'Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Y M C A' and a *'bon appetit'* to aid in the enjoyment of the turkey dinner whose cold, well-roasted drumsticks were protruding from a barrel in the supply camion.

Our Christmas entertainment went off with a bang. There was a good crowd and we all enjoyed a good sing-song, with an excellent quartet and some old-fashioned carols and solos. Some Santas were equipped from the contents of the bags and we all took part in distributing the toys and whistles, paper-caps, etc., among the eager and joyously boisterous soldier-boys. What a tooting and a shrieking and a bedlam of fun ensued, lighted up by the sudden flares and fiery splutterings of the fake cigarettes or interrupted by the loud laughter when some lad opened a surprise box of matches, or by the explosions of the snappers. What curious capers the men cut in their gay headgear! They were all boys once more, and we are almost sure that no family of lads in America had more fun than they when Santa came around. Barnum and Bailey's parade and brass bands had nothing on us when we all lined up and encircled the parade grounds in a grand march of Christmas joy. It seemed from the noise they made that the men wanted and expected the folks across the waters to hear and to take comfort from the fact that they

were actually happy on this night, even though they were in the far-off 'Somewhere in France.' The little tin fifes and rubber bagpipes and rattling drums played all the famous marches of the Allies in perfect discord. The Officer of the Day rushed out, expecting to be swept off his feet by an invasion of the Hun hordes. As the line swung back into the Y M C A hut, in twos, they were served by the ladies to cups of hot chocolate, cigarettes, and cakes, and we gave them the Christmas Greeting cards of the Y M C A, with our own personal good wishes and an extra card or two to send home to their folks.

We all feel that the party was a success; our hut was like a home to every man; there was no disorder of any kind, no jostling for hand-outs or anything of the sort, and at the hour of departure numbers of the boys came up to us and thanked us for one of the best Christmases they had ever enjoyed. Today there is a different spirit in the camp and a change of attitude towards the Y M C A. We did not forget the prisoners, white or colored, but gave them a treat the next night. We will not forget their gratitude or the speech of one of their number, who told us feelingly of their appreciation of our remembrance.

We as workers want to thank the Paris office for the fact of being actually drawn nearer to the men than ever before, and for the feeling of real cooperation with the whole organization of the Y M C A as shown by this splendid sensing of the needs of the soldiers, and the actual meeting of those needs.

Wishing you a happy New Year, we are,

Very sincerely yours,

W. D. Shipps.
Roy A. Welker.
D. H. Hoves, Jr."

The hut may be at the front. It may be in a room of what is left of a house in a ruined village. It may be in a shell proof shelter near where the trench system begins and where already some of our workers have laid down their lives.

One "Y" worker, a man past middle life, had been removed by the Army during a gas attack and had been taken to the hospital. For hours we had searched and finally discovered him in a French hospital, which was cleverly concealed in a forest by the side of the road. He was far past middle life and had insisted upon going to the most dangerous point on the American line to man the Y M C A hut—a mere dugout built there for the boys in the trenches.

They told us he had stood at his post when the attack was on and had been carried off unconscious. He greeted us with a cheery smile, but could only talk in a whisper.

"Yes," he said, "It was the gas . . . got me . . . but I'm all right . . . now. I will soon . . . be back . . . at my work . . . again. I hope . . . you can visit . . . the boys at the hut."

That was a request that could not be denied, and after a friendly visit, we made our plans to go to the place where he had left his comrade to man the hut alone and to minister to the men in the trenches. We had to wait until the dark came down before we could reach the hut. The roads had all been photographed and registered and danger lurked in every foot of that front line.

When it grew dusk we started. The Ford camion-

ette was ready, and chocolate, cigarettes, matches, crackers, figs, candles, and a few knicknacks were stowed away for delivery.

What a ride it was—over roads dark and shell-torn, past ammunition trucks working their way to the front through the long road-lane safeguarded by camouflage on every side and overhead, past trees torn by shrapnel, and through destroyed and desolate villages, over hills gutted by shells with abri-shelters here and there in the rocks and soldiers standing sentry. There among the wooded hills the masked batteries spoke their tragic message. At last we came to the end. The road went no further. The highway ran right into the "Y" dugout on the hillside.

A group of soldiers stood at the door of the hut waiting for the supplies we had brought. Their welcome was heard before we arrived. "Here comes the old 'Y'," they shouted. I noticed one of the men standing apart from the rest, with his helmet split up the back. My companion said, "How in thunder did you do that?" "Shrapnel," he said, and turned away to break off a piece of chocolate. He was muddy, discouraged, and dispirited. While the canteen supplies were being taken off, and the shells went shrieking and crying over our heads, he told me what had happened.

"I've had about all I want," he said. "When the Boches turned their barrage on us, some of the fellows couldn't stand it and were ready to run, but there was no place to run to, so we stood up to it. It was our first experience under fire. Yes, one of my pals was

killed at my side and some were wounded, and when the gas came over, others were caught. When the shrapnel struck my helmet, I said, 'That's your number,' and when I looked, I saw a piece of hot iron at my feet, and here's my cap to show for it." He was silent for awhile and his thoughts were far away. Then he said, "Why do you fellows come out here? God knows what we would do without you. But I can't see through your game. The 'Y' is like father and mother to us, but you don't have to come. None of you belong to the draft age. The man that drives that Ford out here every night is nearly sixty years old. Why do you come?" he said. "You don't have to."

It had never been put up to me just like that and I couldn't answer. Metcalf, who had driven the car, is a college professor. His exact age is fifty-seven, and no one could ever charge him with being a slacker, and no one would ever dare to ask him why he was there.

Only one "Y" man was in the dugout and for awhile we talked together about the fighting and then of home. He belonged to the same place back home as I did, and we talked of the people we knew and of the big city. He plucked a few flowers from the hillside and wrapping them in a piece of newspaper asked if I would deliver them back home to the one he loved. Searching for an answer to my hero's question, I said,

"Why did you come out here?"

He looked at me as if I had said something foolish.

"Because I couldn't stay at home," he said.

"How long are you going to stay?"

His answer came quick and sure:

"Till the war is ended right and a year after."

When I saw my friend with the smashed helmet he had had a cup of hot chocolate and a few figs and was feeling like a fighting man again. The "Y" had performed the ministry it came out to do, and that elusive thing officers call "morale" had been again established. He was ready to go back in the morning and avenge himself and his country for his lost pal.

"I know why you fellows are here," he said. "You are here because we are here." He was right. The "Y" men had come with the American Army to win the war.

CHAPTER VI

THE WORLD IN FRANCE

The world is in France. To France in our day, as to Jerusalem in days gone by, the tribes of the world go up.

We thought the world was in America. We have been accustomed to speak of America as the melting pot of the world. From every nation under heaven, people have come to America to be molded into democracy's ideal citizenship. Today, however, France is the melting pot of the world. In France we discover the new internationalism. While men discuss "The League to Enforce Peace," some such league has gathered on the shores of France. Every nation that loves liberty and raises the standard of freedom is represented today in France.

The ship upon which we traveled to France spoke of this new internationalism. The passenger list included people from all ranks and from all nations. We had on board a group of American marines prepared for naval aviation in France. There were fifty Y M C A Secretaries equipped for service in the American, French, and Italian armies. There were twelve Y W C A women going for service in French munition plants and with American telephone girls. We had with us twenty-five men of the Red Cross who

were to see service on the battle front and to report their findings to the American people. There were twelve women doctors, ready for surgical service in the hospitals of France. Dr. Alexis Carrel, the eminent French surgeon who has done so much to alleviate the suffering of war's wounded and shattered humanity, was returning to his ministry of mercy on the battle front. Men high in the ranks of world diplomacy were there—the "French High Commission" returning from its visit to America; the American minister to Switzerland going back to his post; the Serbian ambassador to France returning from his official mission to America; and the representative of the American Embassy to France.

Men distinguished in military science were there—among them Major Requin, who had carried General Foch's message to the French Division which struck the victorious blow in the Battle of the Marne. There were educators and entertainers going forward for service with our troops and with the soldiers of France—among others Madame Giles of the French Opera, Elsie Janis of the American stage, and Ella Wheeler Wilcox, who told how her study of world religions had resulted in the familiar verse:

"So many gods, so many creeds,
So many paths that wind and wind,
And just the art of being kind
Is all this old world needs."

The mingling of the nations in France has given a new France, a France that is no longer pleasure-

loving nor fashion-following, but a France that is serious, war-scarred, heroic, and defiant; a France that during four years of war has by her men in blue held 304 out of the 400 miles which make up the western front. It is France represented by her women in black who cry through sorrow and sacrifice, *"Vive la France."* It is France whose Army proclaims against all the forces of iniquity the triumphant watchword: "They shall not pass."

Into the motherland of France have come all the children of France. The colonies of France are there —Senegal, Madagascar, Tunis, Algeria. The France of Europe and the France of Africa are there, united and victorious. To one of the French colored men from North Africa one of our colored soldiers from the Southland made overtures of friendship, but was greeted in the French language, which conveyed no meaning to the soldier from America. His confusion found expression in the words, "For the Lord's sake, here's a nigger who don't know his own language."

Belgium is there in the person of her Army, her orphaned children, and her refugees. The Belgian Army tenaciously clings to a little strip of land fifteen miles from the French frontier, her government exiled, her heroic King and Queen living under the sound of the guns, everything gone but honor, the blood of her martyrs crying unto the nations for vengeance by night and by day.

Great Britain is there. She is there and on fourteen other fronts. She has driven Germany from her colonies and closed the gates of the sea upon her com-

merce. She is there with her great Army. Her "contemptible army" of 160,000 has grown into millions. In two years she put 5,000,000 volunteers into France. Her casualty list for 1917 was 800,000. Her casualty list for the month of May was 40,000 a week. She has raised the age of enlistment to fifty, and, while her Navy guards the high seas and makes possible the transport of our troops to France, she defies the power of Germany in the west. Scotland is there. Out of a population of 5,000,000 Scotland has sent to the colors 1,000,000 men. It is perhaps the greatest record in history, and, so efficient has been that army that Harry Lauder, loved and honored among men, has humorously said that if all the Army had been in kilts, the war would have been over long since. The people of Ireland and of Wales are there. Conan Doyle gives high praise to the Welsh, and all the world knows that the first Victoria Cross granted in this war was won by an Irishman.

With all her children, Britain is there. Canada is there. For nearly three years Canada has represented the spirit of the western world on the battle field. So truly has the pulse of Canada beat in harmony with the best spirit of the United States that the call which brought 400,000 Canadians to the colors brought 30,000 Americans across the line into that same Canadian Army. One out of sixteen of the population in Canada has entered the service and 41,000 have laid down their lives on the battle field in France.

Australia is there. The Australian soldier, with his jaunty hat and defiant stride, has a peerless record

among the soldiers of the Allied Armies. Of their own accord 400,000 volunteers have crossed 12,000 miles of sea, and, while 100,000 of them have been wounded and 47,000 of them have laid down their lives, only 3,000 have been taken prisoner by the enemy.

The record of the colonies of Great Britain is an illustrious one. The presence of the troops from South Africa is one of the marvels of history. In fifteen years the land that was Britain's fighting foe has become, through the wise and wonderful colonial policy of the motherland, changed to fighting friend.

Even India, from whom Germany expected so much, has responded to the call of the Empire. The best maps of the harbors and roads and cities of India are in Berlin. The best wireless station in India was erected on the smokestack of a German mission station and from that secret wireless station the "Emden" got her information concerning the movement of ships in the Indian Ocean. Yet India has sent a million men to the front, and has justified the words of Kipling, "Who dies if England lives."

Italy is there. During the great spring drive we saw the armies of Italy moving up into the French battle line. America forgets that the Italy of today, the Italy of Cavour and Mazzini and Garibaldi, is yet a child among the nations. Nevertheless she has equipped and thrown into the battle nearly 4,000,000 men, and holds the Central Powers at bay.

Serbia is there; and Portugal and Poland. I visited a Polish camp in the heart of France, a camp im-

mortalized by the letters of Alan Seeger, and there I found 5,000 American Poles in French uniform training for the coming battle. It was one of the most interesting of all the camps visited. Lovers of art and music, they were discovering ways of expression unthought of in other encampments. They had taken limestone, and pieces of broken glass, and had fashioned from them wonderful representations of the American flag, of the Polish ensign, of President Wilson and Marshal Joffre, and had decorated each barracks with its own distinguishing insignia. They had created from among themselves a band consisting of thirty pieces and were training to play "The Marseillaise," "The Star Spangled Banner," and "God Save the King." From their long day's march we saw them come swinging into camp to the lilt of a song.

China is there. The most interesting service I was present at in France was a Chinese service. No one seems to know how many Chinese there are in France. To the publisher of an American encyclopedia, which stated that there were 500,000 Jews in America, Mark Twain wrote, saying there must be some mistake, for he knew that many personally. I think I saw at least 500,000 Chinese in France!

They are laboring with the French and British and the American troops, building roads and railroads and acting as laborers in camp construction. There are about a thousand in the barracks which we visited. They thought they were in America. They had come across the Pacific and had gone through Canada and across the Atlantic and they thought they were then

in America. A few days before I reached the camp a tragedy had taken place and an American sentry had shot a Chinese. The Chinese had not understood what was wanted and had insisted on passing along the highway, so he had paid for his mistake with his life. The men were sullen and resentful and the Army Staff was unable to secure satisfactory service from them. The whole situation was menacing and ominous.

When conditions were most dangerous, a Chinese missionary, Dr. Walter Scott Elliot, stepped into the camp. He came as one of the Y M C A Secretaries. He had been in China for fifteen years. Immediately the atmosphere changed and the situation improved. He was able in a few hours to discover the mind of the Chinese workmen and to relate them to the American Staff. His presence increased their efficiency fifty per cent. The night he arrived we went to their barracks, a great dark room filled with wood smoke. We carried two or three bushels of peanuts and a basket of cigarettes and after we had disposed of our wares, which took only a few minutes, they gathered around us and around the two candles which lighted the darkness and listened to a talk on the obedience which gives freedom. The service of these Chinese and Indian missionaries who teach the men how to read and write, who interpret their needs and necessities to the Army, and who minister to them in their spiritual affairs, is one of the finest services rendered by the Y M C A in France and has of itself justified the foreign missionary policy of the Christian Church. Writing from one of the camps, where

he had been sent at the urgent request of the Army, one of our Chinese missionaries acting as a Y M C A Secretary, wrote to Mr. Fred B. Shipp at the Paris headquarters:

"Army Post-Office, Number 713.

"Dear Mr. Shipp:

"The situation here is such that I do not see how I could be needed more anywhere in Europe. In my camp there are about 800 Chinese. 250 more came last night, and 300 this afternoon. All the men are from my province, Shantung. Some are old acquaintances and they understand every word I say. They received me most cordially and the officers who are directing them in their work say I have increased their efficiency one-fourth.

"Major Bates is enthusiastic about the Y M C A work.

"Charles A. Leonard."

Russia is in France—poor, betrayed, and bewildered Russia. Soldiers that once fought side by side with British and French are now marking time, awaiting the day of delayed deliverance.

Even Germany is there in the person of her prisoners—Germany that can betray and deceive but cannot defeat; Germany that has three allies and no friend.

And America is there. She occupies land from the ports of entry to the Vosges Mountains. The American troops line the highways of France. They represent all America—America from shops and schools, from colleges and farms, from cities and villages, America East and West, North and South,

America black and America white, America native-born and naturalized. Americans born in England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, Africa, Cuba, Italy, Poland, Austria, even in Germany itself, are there. It is America one and united that is in France today. Rev. Robert Freeman, who has had much to do with the religious work connected with the Y M C A in France, has given this thought beautiful expression.

We come from Old New England,
We come from Siskiyou,
We mowed the grain upon the plain,
We picked the cotton too;
We mined in far Alaska,
We built the Roosevelt Dam;
We staked our claim, but all the same,
We're one for Uncle Sam.

Our fathers came from Scotia,
Or they crossed the Irish sea,
There's blood in us of Frank and Russ,
We sing of Italy;
We're sons of Johnny Bull,
We're sons of Abraham.
It took the earth to give us birth,
We're one for Uncle Sam.

We're off to fight for freedom,
In lands of foreign speech,
To make them feel from Kut to Kiel,
The length of Samuel's reach,
We're off to fight for freedom,
From here to Ispaham;
To bear our stars and flaming bars,
For man and Uncle Sam.

We're one for Uncle Sam,
We're one for Uncle Sam,
It used to be for you and me,
But now it's Uncle Sam,
In danger anywhere,
In earth or sea or air,
The Boche and Hun will find us one,
All One for Uncle Sam.

These boys know why they are in France. They are there because of their righteous indignation. They remember Belgium, with its horrors and atrocities. They remember the Lusitania, with its martyred women and little children. They remember the gas, the liquid fire, and the betrayed signals of the Red Cross. They remember broken promises and open boats at sea. They remember Dernberg and Bernstorff and the traitors who directed and inspired the cruelties of this war. They have seen images and pictures of Christ defaced and mutilated. In France they have heard stories of martyred men and outraged women, and, while they may not have followed the philosophy that has led Germany into this world tragedy, they know who is responsible and they know that the Kaiser, if he had lifted his hand, could have stayed the storm of war.

There is a time to be forgiving and there is a time to be angry. Patience with wrong is not a virtue.

Our men have gone forth to the battle fired with a passion of holy wrath. Words written concerning John Brown of slavery days make a new appeal:

"God give us angry men in every age,
Men with indignant souls at sight of wrong,
Men whose whole being glows with righteous rage,
Men who are strong for those who need the strong."

But our men are in France, not because of animosity or hatred, but because of love and the passion of a great ideal. They are there because they have known what it is to live under a flag of freedom and they fight for those ideals for which that flag stands. One night under the sound of the guns, we were conducting a quiet Sunday evening service. The boys had been singing some of the old hymns and the last one they sang closed with the words:

"In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me.
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on."

After the service a young fellow who had gone forth into the Army from the theological seminary came to me and asked if I would take a message to one whom he loved back in America. She had promised to send him anything he wished, even to half the kingdom, and, taking her at her word, he was making his wishes known. Men are very open about their lives in France and share their secrets with those whom they trust. What did he want from her? He wanted a little American flag, the best she could buy.

And why did he wish it? He wanted an American flag, the best money could buy, to drape over her picture.

That story reveals the psychology of the American Army—an American flag, draped around a woman's face. The face may be of one whose hair has grown gray with the years or of a little curly-headed child. The face may be that of mother, wife, sweetheart, sister, or little babe. That is the secret which holds the heart of the American soldier, and for love's sake he suffers and endures all things that they and those whom he loves may be free.

When I was in France the Paris edition of the *New York Herald* offered a prize for the best poem written by one of the soldiers. It was won by Private W. L. Grundish of the 15th Engineers. What he wrote was not for himself only, but for all his comrades.

"When I behold the tense and tragic night
Shrouding the earth in vague, symbolic gloom,
And when I think that, ere my fancy's flight
Has reached the portals of the inner room
Where knightly ghosts, guarding the secret ark
Of brave romance, through me shall sing again,
Death may engulf me in eternal dark—
Still I have no regret nor poignant pain.
Better in one ecstatic epic day
To strike a blow for Glory and for Truth,
With ardent, singing heart to toss away
In Freedom's holy cause my eager youth,
Than bear as weary years pass one by one,
The knowledge of a sacred task undone."

CHAPTER VII

A SUNDAY WITH THE ARMY

In the first-line trenches Sunday slips out of the reckoning. I met a couple of lads returning from the firing line, who had a wager whether the day they got their leave was Saturday or Monday. Both of them lost. The day was Sunday.

In the base camps, however, and along the lines of communication, in port cities when troops are not arriving, in the great construction camps, Sunday has a unique place in the Army. People who say the Army takes no account of Sunday and remind you of the great battles fought on that day fail to distinguish between the front line and the camps of the rear.

It is impossible, even in France, to escape the atmosphere of Sunday. The boys themselves create the atmosphere. Even if the Y M C A canteen is open and ball game, boxing bout, or band concert is scheduled for the parade ground, the day has its own message and its own great memories for thousands.

I have in my mind a picture of one of the most beautiful of France's beautiful roads. It runs between rows of trees and had blossomed into springtime beauty. It follows the course of one of the most fascinating rivers of France. From camp to village

"Y" Headquarters of the Type Used with Troops That Move Frequently

is a distance of four miles and our boys in groups, in pairs, and alone, were taking their Sunday afternoon stroll in the sun. The atmosphere of the whole situation fell upon me like a benediction.

A lad of twenty from North Dakota was walking with a group of little French boys. They were making a language path for their friendship by exchanging English words for French. With the help of a little pocket French-English dictionary, they were introducing each other to a new world. They had met by appointment and this was the third Sunday they had been together. Such scenes are common in hundreds of French villages.

I was in France on Easter Sunday. The great German drive of March 21st was on, and the long-range gun was shelling Paris. The air was electric with war excitement. I was under appointment to conduct Easter services at the Y M C A hut in the town where General Pershing's headquarters are located. Traveling was very difficult, almost impossible. The railroads were freighted with troops going to the front and many of the stations were crowded with civilians seeking safety—refugees of northern France.

The night before we had been in a town where for five successive nights the Germans had dropped their death-dealing bombs. They had threatened to destroy the place in twelve days. I saw the entire population moving out. It was a sight never to be effaced from memory. I saw old men and women led by wounded soldier sons; boys and girls, each carrying a loaf of bread; little curly-haired children in baby-

carriages; the sick on stretchers—all moving out leaving behind them their homes and their shops, moving out to spend the dreaded night upon the roadside, in the woods or in the wine cellars of the hills. In one of the wine cellars where forty people had taken refuge only one escaped when a bomb fell upon their *abri*. Next day, fifty miles to the south, I found the streets and the station crowded with these refugees who were seeking security, especially for their little children, in the far southland of France.

I reached the headquarters of General Pershing long after midnight. The darkness of war was upon the village. Not a light in street or home was to be seen. I felt my way through the narrow streets, listening for a footfall. Darkness is one of the fruits of war and the dark towns of northern France speak of air raids and enemy bombs; at night to walk in the light is a forgotten luxury. A moonlight night awakens other thoughts than those of the poet and instead of being welcomed is dreaded.

Next day was Easter Sunday. The morning broke in beauty upon the French hills surrounding the camp. It was the American Army's first Easter since the declaration of war, and every man was thinking back through the months to the old familiar scenes before the war came to claim him. There was everywhere a touch of Easter about the Y M C A huts throughout France. Soldiers and sailors met in port cities, along the lines of communication, behind front line trenches, and joined in the Lord's Supper.

A young lad from Pennsylvania, just past his

seventeenth year, said that it was the first Easter he and his widowed mother had been separated, but he felt she would be glad to know he had not missed the Easter Communion.

The Chaplain led the morning service in the "Y" hut at headquarters. A group of army boys led the singing. A soldier in khaki played the piano, and another the violin. One of the "Y" women, just before the service opened, brought to the table which served for a pulpit a bouquet of flowers she had gathered in the woods nearby. Behind the platform on the wall the French, British, and American flags hung side by side. The hut was crowded with men. They sat on narrow benches without backs. They belonged to the ranks and to the staff; a major and a private, a captain and a sergeant, an orderly and an officer, sat side by side. The hymns spoke of things fundamental—"Come, Thou Almighty King," "O God, Our Help in Ages Past," "Abide with Me." The sermon was short, as all army sermons ought to be, and the prayers were simple, speaking of home and loved ones, of the wounded, the sick, and the dying, of the day's cares and tomorrow's needs, of the power of God to help and hold forever.

All over France that day similar services were repeated. At one of the aviation centers 700 men crowded the "Y" hut, and 200 remained for the Communion Service that followed. In one of the port cities, where Dr. John C. Acheson conducted memorable religious services, five sailor-lads ran three miles, fearing they would miss the service where a hundred

men from the ships were gathering for the Holy Supper. Men were touching God in a foreign land and were holding fellowship with those they loved at home.

The great camp, with its restless, buoyant young manhood, is sufficient unto itself Sunday afternoon. It needs no direction, no oversight, no supervision; with a baseball and a bat the American Army can take care of itself when duty ceases to call. Every regiment has its ball-team, the best in France, and every hundred yards has its ball-game, with its interested spectators and its applauding rivalry. Company C. of the 15th Engineers claims to have a team that has never been beaten. It is not an unusual sight on a Sunday afternoon to see the people of France watching America playing ball, and behind their intense interest they are saying that a good ball-player will make a superb grenade thrower. Meanwhile the band has gathered its own crowd and has stirred memories of Broadway and Fifth Avenue, and as they play the boys break out into singing:

"Where do we go from here boys,
Where do we go from here?
Slip a pill to Kaiser Bill
And make him shed a tear;
And when we see the enemy
We'll shoot him in the rear,
Oh joy, oh boy, where do we go from here?"

Our Easter Sunday afternoon was spent with the boys in the Roosevelt Hospital Unit. Rev. George M. Duff of the Y M C A had charge of the afternoon's services, and Senator Leroy Percy and I had

promised to help. To spend Easter Sunday in a hospital in a foreign land is not the most pleasant of prospects, but we were glad to carry a message of friendly cheer to the men. Some of our boys had been to the front and had returned sick or wounded or gassed, and to ward after ward we carried the sunshine of church and home. We took with us an armful of hymn-books, some Easter pictures, and a little baby organ. At one service Secretary Duff played and I led the singing, and in the next ward the order was reversed. The singing was best when he led, for the mass singing of a group of gassed and wounded men partook mostly of solo singing on the part of the leader, and Duff has a well-trained tenor voice. The services were familiar and friendly. Personal friendship goes far in the Army. The men like to be "located" and in a few minutes they had related themselves to Ohio, Illinois, Tennessee, New York, Montana, Pennsylvania. In France, Chicago and Denver are neighbors, and Pittsburgh and Philadelphia twin cities. Senator Percy told them about America and the unfailing love that held the hearts of the home folk, and of the nation's pride in their well-doing. We read the ever-thrilling Easter story and gave a short talk on the Easter message.

The first group needed a word peculiar to itself. It was composed of men who had through their own misconduct brought sorrow upon themselves. They had stood up against the Hun undaunted, but had surrendered to the evil thing that lies in wait to deceive and destroy. It was not a word of reproach they

heard, but a word calling them to their best. "Love believeth all things, hopeth all things." They listened quietly to words written by a private, and felt the pull of the Spirit within them.

"The kid has gone to the colors,
And we don't know what to say;
The kid we've loved and coddled,
Stepped out for the flag today.
We thought him a child, a baby,
With never a care at all,
But the country called him man-size,
And the kid has heard the call.
He paused to watch the recruiting,
When fired by the fife and drum,
He bowed his head to Old Glory,
And thought that it whispered, 'Come.'
The kid, not being a slacker,
Stood forth with patriotic joy,
To add his name to the roster,
And, God, we're proud of that boy."

In the next ward were boys who had been wounded on the Lorraine front. They had gone "over the top" for freedom. One brave fellow, whose wound would put him out of the war, said, when we tried to sympathize with him, "Well, war is hell, and hell is fire, and it wasn't a pink tea I expected." One young lad had five wounds and he was cheerfully counting the days when he would be back in it all again. To them the Easter message was interpreted as one of victory, the triumph of truth, the conquest of life at its best, of the living Christ whose triumph is the pledge of victory over every foe.

I shall never forget the evening service. The games of the afternoon were finished, the letters home had been mailed, the walks to the outlying villages were over, and the great "Y" hut at headquarters was crowded to the doors. Two or three hundred men, not able to secure seats, stood during the entire service. A choir of soldiers led the singing, but little leading was needed. A boy who came up out of the audience sang:

"When I fear the foe will win,
Christ will hold me fast."

French soldiers in blue gave color to the crowd in khaki. One always sees French soldiers, privates or officers, at the "Y" services. Perhaps they wish to improve their English, but frequently they express deep personal interest in the message. Uniforms and official insignia do not change men and these boys in khaki belong to American church-going homes. It is easier to preach to soldiers than to any other group of men. Their religion is unconventional, personal, practical, and vital. Kennedy Studdert in his "Rough Rhymes of a Padre" has touched off the soldier's theology.

"It ain't as I 'opes E'll keep me safe
While the other blokes go down;
It ain't as I wants to leave the world
And wear an 'ero's crown.
It ain't for that as I says my prayers
When I goes to an attack,
But I pray that whatever comes my way
I may never turn me back.

I leaves the matter o' life and death
To the Father who knows what's best;
And I prays that I still may play the man
Whether I turns east or west.
I'd sooner that it were east, ye know,
To Blighty and my gal Sue;
I'd sooner be there wi' the gold in 'er 'air
And the skies behind, all blue;
But still I pray I may do my bit,
And then if I must turn west,
I'll be unashamed when my name is named,
And I'll find a soldier's rest."

After the service a lad came up to the platform and, taking his New Testament from his pocket, opened it and, without a word, showed me where he had written on the flyleaf my name, the date, and two New Testament texts. "Where did we meet before?" I asked. "Allentown," he answered. I had spoken in the Y M C A tent at Allentown to the Ambulance Corps in the summer of 1917, and the message still lived. That is the reward one gets now and again, and it is enough.

CHAPTER VIII

WOMEN AND THE WAR

In a book all women have read, "Sesame and Lilies," John Ruskin says: "There is not a war in the world, no, nor an injustice, but you women are answerable for it; not in that you have provoked, but in that you have not hindered. There is no suffering, no injustice, no misery, in the earth, but the guilt of it rests solely with you."

Ruskin feels that women sense injustice and react to cruelty quicker than men. They are quick to gird on the armor for defense and vindication. They glory in heroism and rejoice in valor. Since the days of chivalry war has waited upon a woman's word.

If women inspire the sacrifice of war, they also inspire victory. This war could not have been carried through but for the bravery, the heroism, the self-sacrifice of the women of the world.

We think of the women who have given their men and have sent them forth uncomplainingly. We think of the mothers who have kissed their boys good-bye; of young women just married who have closed their cherished homes, and while their husbands have put on the uniform have girded themselves for service in office and shop and factory; of girls who have turned

away their faces from happy and alluring visions of the future to urge those whose lives were linked in love with theirs, to go out into the unknown dangers. "Remember," said the Captain in a letter quoted elsewhere, "that it is your mother who is brave, not you."

I know a mother in Canada who has sent two sons to the war. After the first month in France they were both reported missing. They had been in the battle of Vimy Ridge and from that day to this no word has come back to her. She still goes about her work; no one has ever seen her shed a tear, but many have heard her say: "I am glad they were willing to go. I would not like to have had them hide behind the sons of other mothers."

"Honor the men who fight and fall,
Honor the men who fight and live,
Honor the women most of all,
Who suffer and give.

"They give their men, their sons,
To make the nations free,
They never see the battle field,
But they gain the victory."

Far down to the south of France I met a woman managing a little shop and selling post-cards to those who would buy. Her face, it was easy to see, had been purified with much sorrow. She had known what it was to suffer. She was one of the refugees from Belgium, proud of the martyrdom of her people in which she shared, rejoicing because of persecution for the cause of righteousness.

Everywhere in France one is face to face with heroism. One night, near the Verdun front, we slept in a town which in the early days of war had been in German hands. We were billeted in the home of the former Mayor of the village. When the Huns ravaged the country they dragged the Mayor out into the street, made him stand with his back to the wall of his home and shot him dead. In a few days the mother of the household was killed by a German shell. The two girls of that home now live alone in that desolate place and carry on the work of the farm. To such belongs the Croix de Guerre.

There are no idle women in France and no weeping women. They are all working women. They are the porters at the depots, the guards on the trains, the conductors on the tramcars, the laborers on the farm and in the factory. If the men of France are in blue, the women of France are in black. How magnificently they carry themselves! I saw a French woman serving as conductor on one of the metropolitan trains one Saturday evening. She was dressed in true French taste, and I instinctively felt, even in that underground car, as if I were being received by a lady of refinement in her own drawing-room.

There is a French woman on the Lorraine battle front who has expended a million francs caring for the graves of the soldier dead. One of our American boys was buried behind the line while we were there, and upon his grave this French patriot placed with reverent hand the Stars and Stripes, the flag for which he died.

Over 1,500,000 women are working in the munition factories of Great Britain, and because of this, Britain is now sending to France in a week as much ammunition as was accumulated in all the Empire when war was declared. The women of Britain are soldiers who know how to endure hardship. They wear no sign of mourning, for they walk with their dead in the land of the living.

Longfellow called Florence Nightingale "The Lady with the Lamp." There are thousands of Florence Nightingales today upon the battle fields of France and Flanders, holding in their strong hands the light of love and mercy. Writing from the front, one of these women serving in a military hospital speaks for all her companions:

"Never have I been so affected and moved in my life as at the hospital this morning. An American lad, right from the front and wounded, was operated on, and while coming out of ether he lived over those minutes before he was hit. It was so dramatic, so terrible that it made our hearts beat faster, for no longer was I in a civilized hospital, but in a veritable hell of mud and fighting. Oh, I have heard French soldiers and I love them, but to hear it in our own dear American slang made me realize that after all it cannot but be one's own country first. He kept crying, 'Ah, I've got that one. Don't tell mother I've killed him, don't. Damn this mud. After them, boys. Fix bayonets, that's a boy.' And with clenched teeth and shaking his fine young head, 'Damn the Huns, the dirty Boches, ah, (a sound of horror) they

are coming waves on waves of them.' My merely writing can't possibly make you picture it, the darkened room on account of the raid, the smell of ether, the tossing figure and young voice, and there are going to be hundreds of them, thousands of them, with youth and the same splendid spirit in them. 'I forgot,' he repeated endlessly, 'they can't lick an American,' and I knew then that they couldn't, not possibly. Oh, how depressed, how unhappy we are about the whole state of the war! Even if the offensive has been stopped, the losses have been so tremendous, so ghastly that one almost wonders if the game is worth the candle. The poor, poor English! My little friend, the Welshman here at the hotel—Welsh Fusiliers he is —keeps thinking of his pals lying dead in those woods which England so hardly won to lose again. The thought of the uselessness of the Somme offensive saddens them so."

In a military hospital one wonders whether the heroes are the women or the wounded. I have seen refined and cultured women by their very presence bring cheer to a hospital full of wounded and broken men. Every nurse is a front-trench hero.

There are about five hundred Y M C A women in France. Two have been mustered out by death, victims of German shells. Under the sound of the guns, I met a young woman, refined and beautiful, a former professor in one of our great American colleges, serving with the Y M C A, the men of the Army. She was equipped with steel helmet and gas mask. When the Colonel discovered her he said, "What in

h—— are you doing here?" She replied, "I am here to help." She was unafraid and she was invaluable. She understood and spoke French fluently and was the only one in that area who could relate the "Y" to the French Army, and sometimes the only one who could act as liaison between American and French officials. She was worth a half dozen men in the peculiar situation where she served.

The Government never calls for help but women are the first to respond. There is a growing group of American telephone girls now in France. I met a dozen of them at dinner one evening. They are sheltered and mothered by a Detroit Y. W. C. A. woman of sense and culture. She has left a home of luxury and comfort and has gone to serve across the sea. These young telephone girls were put in her charge. They had gone to France prepared for any sacrifice. Some of them had cut their hair. Others were equipped with army shoes and all had army uniforms. For every six months' service they are to receive a gold strip to be placed on the sleeve of their dressy dark blue uniforms, for they, too, are among America's heroes.

When the first great German drive was on, General Haig said to his men: "With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the freedom of manhood depend alike upon the conduct of each of us at this critical moment." Our men, too, fight with their backs to the wall. The wall upon which they lean is American womanhood.

A "Y" Tea Garden in Paris

"Human beings," says Anthony Trollope, "need a wall to lean on, some support is necessary." The support men need is a woman's hand and a woman's heart. This is the answer to the repeated question of home folks, "What can we do?" The answer is, "Stand fast." The words of Ruskin which introduced this chapter may be continued in this connection. "The soul's armor," he says, "is never well set to the heart unless a woman's hand has braced it; and it is only when she braces it loosely that the honor of manhood fails." In the background of the battle the soldier sees a woman's face.

In his letters home Coningsby Dawson says: "We have always lived so near to one another's affection that this going out alone is more lonely to me than to most men. I have always had some one near at hand with love-blinded eyes to see my faults as springing from higher motives. Now I reach out my hands across six thousand miles and only touch yours with my imagination to say good-by. What queer sights these eyes, which have been almost your eyes, will witness! If my hands do anything respectable, remember that it is your hands that are doing it. It is your influence as a family that has made me ready for the part I have to play, and where I go, you follow me."

Certain it is, that the touch of home is the touch of power. The songs most frequently sung by British soldiers who have been in the struggle for nearly four years are "home" songs, and the one best known and most loved is:

"In that old-fashioned house in that old-fashioned
street,
Dwell a dear little old-fashioned pair;
I can see their two faces so tender and sweet,
And I love every wrinkle that's there."

On the streets of a city in France toward which our American troop trains converge, I fell in with a young fellow who was seeking information which he had hitherto failed to secure. He seemed depressed and soon opened his heart. He had found army life hard. His words were, "I feel myself sagging." He was a retiring lad and the comradeship of the Army had not yet gripped him. He said he had been ordered to one of the port cities of France. I told him of the men and the work there. "They say it's a h—— hole," he said. I told him that things were better than they were and that he had the secret of security within himself. "Not in myself," he said, "but in this." He drew from his pocket the photo of a girl still in her teens and said, "It's her face that keeps me safe."

The faces of the young women serving as canteen workers in Y M C A huts and officers' clubs are the only reminders of home and loved ones which thousands of our men in France have. Many of the boys have been careless and thoughtless. They carry to France the same temptations, the same weaknesses which dogged their steps at home. It is a familiar sight in the huts to see young fellows hanging around the canteen for no other reason presumably than to hear a woman's voice, and catch the inspiration of her presence. Since history began, immoral women

have always followed the Army, but in this war our men have been followed and helped by good women. The moral value of their service cannot be filed away in any card index system. It belongs to the realm of the inarticulate.

The women of the "Y" are at their best when they take the initiative. They furnish and beautify the hut, the officers' club, and the barracks which are assigned to them. They plan for little homelike afternoons when the weather is bad, on off hours, in the evenings, and on Sunday. They make chocolate and sandwiches. They stand behind the counter and hand out candy, tobacco, crackers, and good cheer. They arrange concerts and entertainments, and pick out the depressed and dispirited for special attention. They recommend books and conduct Bible classes, and are everywhere accredited, "the angels of the camp."

One night near the camp, when the guns were booming, we held a short Sunday evening service in a camouflaged barracks. The men were unusually serious. After the meeting broke up a young officer slipped up and said, "Do you know the 91st Psalm?" I began, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of Jehovah, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust." "Will you come to my room?" he said, and we walked over to the officers' barracks. We sat down in a room dimly lighted and slightly warmed by a little gas-o-peep fire, and he began reading a letter from his wife asking him to make the 91st Psalm his own. Then he told about

his life and his father's life. It was a fascinating story that cannot be given here.

He opened his heart to one who the day before had been a stranger, and he told of his plans for the welfare of his men. "What made you such a staunch Christian?" I said. He took from the wall beside his cot a girl's picture. "She did," he said. "She's the most wonderful woman in the world." It was the picture not of a woman, but of a slip of a girl with laughing eyes and fluffy hair—a girl with a soul, and for him she was like a wall of fire.

CHAPTER IX

ON LEAVE

The first soldier I met in France was recovering from a debauch. He was not an American. He belonged to one of the armies of our Allies. I met him on the street of one of the great port cities. He was without money and very talkative. According to his statement he had been separated from his money the night before and was now 500 miles from his base camp.

We talked about the war and about France and then I asked him about his home. The word "Home" is the key to the soldier's heart. He drew from his pocket a photograph. It was a picture of his wife and his two beautiful children, a boy and a girl, 6,000 miles away. In a moment of penitence he said, "For their sake I am going back on the square, but these days 'on leave' knock h—— out of me."

A soldier "on leave" presents one of the problems of the war. The French soldier can go home. Everything is in his favor. He is fighting with his back to his own fireside and has the advantage of being within a day's journey of those he loves.

It is wonderful to see the French soldier return to his home after he has served his days at the front. He takes his place in the social order as if nothing

had happened. He returns to his desk again. He takes his place in the working world. He is found in the shop or in the factory. He drives a taxi or a tramcar, and is happy in his old associations and in the fact that he has earned for a week at least more than a soldier's pay. If he is an officer, or has wealth in his own keeping, he will shoot woodcock for a week, or ride horseback with his friends.

In a certain sense this is also true of the British soldier. He, too, is within a day's journey of his home. His base camp is within a few hours of the channel, and the channel crossing can be made in a night. The British Tommy and the soldiers from Ireland and Scotland are always within reach of home and in the motherland the Colonials are welcomed in their own language.

It is different with the American soldier. He cannot go home. The language of France is strange to him, and Britain to most is a foreign land. His heart leads him to Paris. Paris draws him like a magnet, but Paris is denied him. Those of us who have been in Paris in war time feel that in this, the soldier is subject to no great deprivation. Paris with its dark streets, with its air raids, and its long-range shells, is not the best place in the world for rest and recreation. The supposition is that Paris is denied to the American soldier because there, strong and subtle temptations are presented. The temptations, however, which soldiers face in the capital city of France present themselves in even worse forms in other cities, and the soldier "on leave" must find protection within himself.

It is good to know that the United States Government, and the officers of the Army and Navy desire to do everything in their power to make the life of the soldier secure.

Liquor is prohibited to American soldiers, as are also wine and beer containing more than twelve per cent alcohol. Wine shops are closed except during meal hours. The meal hours, however, are generous, the evening hours being from five o'clock till nine! It is impossible for the American Army to regulate the liquor traffic of France, for French trade is subject to French law. The American Army, however, can legislate for itself, and this it has done.

Disturbed by the conflicting and contradictory accounts of the moral situation in France, General Pershing cabled the following message to the United States Government:

"Inasmuch as the press reports indicate considerable discussion regarding recent orders issued by me regarding the control of drinking, it is deemed advisable to cable pertinent paragraphs of the orders for such use as the Department may care to make. Paragraph 11: Commanding Officers at all places where our troops may be located will confer with the local French authorities and use every endeavor to limit to the lowest possible number the places where intoxicants are sold. It is desired that these authorities be assisted in locating non-licensed resorts, which should be reported immediately to the proper authority for the necessary action. Paragraph 12: Soldiers are forbidden either to buy or accept as gifts from inhabitants, whiskey, brandy, champagne, liquor, or other alcoholic beverages other than light wines or beer.

The gift or retail sale of these by inhabitants in the zone of the Army is forbidden by French laws. Commanding Officers will see that all drinking places where alcoholic liquors named above are sold, are designated as 'Off Limits' and the necessary means adopted to prevent soldiers visiting them. As there is little beer sold in France, men who drink are thus limited to the light native wines used by all French people. Even this is discouraged among our troops in every possible way. I hope to secure the cooperation of the French Government to prevent the sale of all liquors and wines to our troops. The question is under discussion. Personally I favor prohibition in the Army, but it is impracticable and inadvisable to issue orders that cannot be enforced without the cooperation of the French Government."

The temptation to immorality presents a peculiar problem to our American officials. The laws of France are not the laws of America. The American Army cannot make French laws. Our Army can make laws for itself, and in doing so has succeeded in creating and maintaining the cleanest army the world has ever known. The Army in France is fitter and cleaner than it was when it left America. The official estimate of troops in one of the port cities in relation to venereal disease in October, 1917, was 16.89 to the thousand, and in January, 1918, it was only 2.11 to the thousand. In February, 1918, there were 674 cases in one of our base hospitals: 348 cases of mumps, 37 pneumonia, 23 measles, 19 scarlet fever, 39 venereal disease, the rest minor complaints. In a camp of 1,200 negroes, only 25 were in the guard

house, 16 being there for absence without leave, 3 for fighting, 2 for carrying pistols, 4 for drinking. The situation has often perplexed and discouraged the men responsible for the efficiency of the Army, but at present everything goes to show that nothing has been left undone to safeguard the morals of our men and that America has succeeded beyond all praise.

Sometimes the men when they get their leave prefer to stay near the base. Money frequently is the determining factor. A boy getting $33.00 a month, after he has paid for his Liberty Bond and his insurance and sent home a little to his family, has a narrow margin upon which to take a vacation. And the American soldier does send money home. In March the soldiers sent through the Y M C A to their homes in America $97,000, and during the first two weeks in April they sent $95,000.

To the soldiers who remain in camp the Y M C A owes particular responsibility. The Athletic Department of the "Y" is a veritable means of grace. The men become soggy with monotony. They come back from the trenches with a peculiar emotional life that concentrates itself upon the war. Their thought goes round and round the treadwheel of trench life. Call it shell shock or what you may, it is a physical condition which borders on extreme danger. Reaction sets in quickly and more army men are destroyed through the wrong use of leisure than through anything else. It is then that football, baseball, and basketball become possessed with magic power, and the men are lifted out of themselves into a new world.

Those who can afford it may travel while "on leave." They go to the south of France or to Brittany. Many are students and are interested in the history, literature, and life of the French people. They expect to see France before they return to America, and their leisure becomes an opportunity for self-education and personal enjoyment.

The chief rendezvous, however, of the American soldier when "on leave" is the rest camps among the French Alps at Aix-les-Bains and Chambéry. To these and other leave resorts they go, at the expense of the Army, for a ten days' rest. The valley of the Savoy area is one of the most beautiful and picturesque in the world. Aix-les-Bains is situated on Lake Bourget, which is eleven miles long and lies at the base of Mont du Chat. All kinds of crops are grown in the valley of Aix, the fields are covered with grain, and on the hillside are the familiar vineyards of France. Higher up are groves of chestnut trees, then the pine woods, and further up the Alpine forests. The snowcapped mountains rise like sentinels in the distance, and from the top of Mont Revard a marvelous view can be had of the Swiss Alps and of Mont Blanc. The air is pure and the temperature most regular. It is one of the world's most famous resorts. Its medicinal waters are famous and the Romans gave the place the name of Aquae Gratianae. The remains of their splendid baths are still there.

The Y M C A has taken over the famous Casino of Aix-les-Bains, and the hotels of the town have been chartered for the use of American soldiers when on

leave. In this rest area the "Y" has a staff of fifty-two Secretaries, half of them women.

When the war fell upon France the Casino lost its patronage. No gambling has been permitted in France since the first days of the war. At a cost of several hundred thousand francs the Y M C A has taken over this marvelous building. What was once a gambling hall and a place of luxury has become a place of repair for the armies of America. On the walls may be seen such signs as:

"If you want a New Testament ask for it."

"Ask the 'Y' Secretary for the new swear words."

"Can the cussing."

"Communion service Sunday morning at 10 o'clock."

"Excursion on the lake this afternoon at 2 o'clock. Tickets at the desk."

"The train for Mont Revard leaves at 1 o'clock. Mr. Smith will lead the party."

In what was once the Royal Bar a prayer service is held every morning at nine o'clock. The "Grand Circle," a most attractive theater, which seats comfortably a thousand people, is the "Y" play-house for the men on leave. It was there that Mr. E. H. Sothern, as a Y M C A Secretary, gave his exhibitions of Shakespeare, and there also that the John Craig Company of Boston produced their exquisite shows for the amusement of our men.

The letters of the boys themselves reflect the value of this splendid service.

"France, February 21, 1918.

Your letter of the 29th of December received ten days ago, but had no chance to answer it till now, as I have been in the trenches for quite a long time. At the present time I am on pass at one of the most beautiful resorts in France. The people are very kind to us, and will do anything for us, if they think they can please us by it.

I was in the first bunch to land here. They took movies of us, pictures for the papers and magazines. Maybe we weren't an awful sight, mud from head to foot, but that made us look more realistic. I tell you Sherman was right; war is h——, but we'll make the Boche think it's worse than that when we get through with them. When we first went into the line the Boche were very careless, they would stick their heads out of the trenches; but now they know the Americans are there, and they don't dare show themselves if they value their life. There have been times when I couldn't have sold my life for two cents. Just imagine how you would feel if you were lying in the bottom of a muddy trench with shrapnel bursting around you and covering you up with dirt. It would make you homesick, wouldn't it? That is an everyday occurrence.

The Y M C A people are right on the job here. When we landed, the train had hardly stopped before they were there giving us chocolate. You should see their building, most magnificent place I ever saw—hardwood floors, enormous mirrors, huge marble pillars, billiard tables, theater, moving picture, beautiful reading and writing rooms—it certainly is grand. Before the Y M C A took it over it was used by millionaires. Just imagine staying at the same hotel J. P. Morgan stayed at—some class!

Mostly every day we climb the mountains some

5,000 feet high, from which can be seen the whole of the Alps. It certainly is grand. I have a beautiful room with a fine bed, electric lights, much better than pumping water out of a dugout and going to sleep in a bunk made of chicken wire, but this life is the most healthy of all."

"March 24, 1918.

Until my trip to Aix I must confess I lacked confidence in the Y M C A, and I used to teach in ours back in the States. At Aix my confidence was completely restored and I shall never do any knocking again. I shall have to bend my energies and aspirations along that line to something that really needs reform. Perhaps I can find something. Scarcely a day goes by that we do not go over the trip to Aix again. You may be sure that we miss you all; indeed the meeting of such charming people was just what we needed, for it gave us a sort of mental renovation. You surely are doing your bit in a splendid way."

"April 2, 1918.

The Y M C A and its representatives, both men and women, are doing wonderful work over here and they have huts and workers in every camp and sector of the U. S. Army. The retinue of workers here at Aix les Bains is too wonderful to describe. Never since I left home, the first of May, have I encountered such welcome and hospitality. They try to make you forget all your troubles and enjoy yourself in a very jolly and fitting manner and what is more, they actually do. If the mothers back home could see the moral effect produced by these people on their sons, I am sure that a great burden and a lot of worry would be lifted from them."

"April 2, 1918.

The Y M C A is the one smile of our life here. They are at the ports, concentration camps, in the

cities, on the lines of communication, and go direct to the trenches. They have an utter disregard of their own safety, saying, 'Where you go, we go.' Two young Y M C A ladies have been knocked off this week, and they only arrived in February. They are everywhere with a word of cheer, encouragement, reading, and the ever-famous canteen. Then we arrive 'on permission' and find them in possession of the big Casino at Aix les Bains, with all sorts of amusements at a cost of $1,000,000 a year—*well spent;* for thousands of fellows will come here."

"April 5, 1918.

I would be delighted if you could tell mother just how we looked and seemed to be feeling from our toes up. Tell her of the smiles that the soldiers are wearing, how we spend our vacation on leave and all the good things that the 'Y' does for us in the Savoy district. I will say that it does everything that a good friend or brother or sister could do for one on a visit.

The Savoy district is charming and it has a most wonderful history. It inspires one to higher ideals and gives one a chance to think why we are fighting for justice and that we *never* will give up the fight till German vain ideas are crushed and she adopts the modern idea of government as it has been set forth by the people of the world.

Give Mother and all a good excuse why I don't write more often, or why they don't get big fat letters. I will say, it's a strenuous life that we are living and after the duties of the day are finished, a letter is out of the question."

When the soldiers arrive, they are welcomed at the station, and when they leave they are escorted to the

train. The day we were there 200 of them marched through the streets from the Casino to the depot, singing their cheery songs, only to find that the train was three hours late.

The officer in charge gave the boys leave to go where they liked. When the time came to round them up again all but seven of the 200 were found in the Casino. They had returned to the Y M C A headquarters, drawn by the subtle attraction of the staff and the service.

The days "on leave" are planned for the boys by the men and women of the "Y." Boat trips upon the lake, fishing parties in the hills, walks and picnics, are planned for every day of their stay. The crowning trip, however, is the ride up the cogwheel railway to the top of Mont Revard. The day we went up with the boys will never be forgotten. The snow had fallen a few days before and four to six feet of snow lay upon the mountains. For two days the train had been unable to run and this was the first trip after the tracks had been cleared.

The President of the railroad accompanied us. The sun was shining as on a summer day and no breath of wind stirred. It was one of the most perfect of days. When we reached the station the guide said it was impossible to reach the tower on the summit; the snow he said was too deep. "Nothing is impossible," said one of the women Secretaries, and started out with the remark, "I'll lead the way." And she did lead the way and in ten minutes a beaten path was made to the summit of the mountain. A French

photographer took moving pictures of the company as they made their way over the trail, and took more pictures of the improvised snowball battle on the summit. These pictures have since been seen in the moving picture theaters of America, but they do not tell that the trip was planned and made possible by the men and women of the Y M C A.

We sat in the snow in the soft glow of sunshine almost like summer and looked out over the precipice to the range of mountains beyond us. We were looking east and one of the number began to say:

"It is good to see the old world, and travel up and down."

And then, at the urgent request of those who knew the familiar words, with his back to the precipice, his face toward Mont Blanc, with a great group of American soldiers and French civilians in front of him, Senator Leroy Percy of Mississippi quoted with one significant alteration, the verses which are perhaps the best which Henry Van Dyke has written, and which the soldiers in the American camps in France love to hear:

"Oh, it's home again, and home again, America for me!
My heart is turning home again to God's countrie,
To the land of youth and freedom, beyond the ocean bars,
Where the air is full of sunshine and the flag is full of stars.

It is good to see the old world, and travel up and down
Among the famous countries and the cities of renown,

To admire the crumbly castles, and the monuments and kings;
But soon or late you have enough of antiquated things.

Oh, London is a man's town, there's power in the air;
And Paris is a woman's town, with flowers in her hair;
And it's sweet to loaf in Venice, and it's great to study Rome;
But when it comes to living, there is no place like home.

I like *the Alpine* fir-woods in green battalions drilled;
I like the gardens of Versailles with flashing fountains filled;
But oh to take your hand, my dear, and ramble for a day
In the friendly Western woodland where nature has her way!

Oh! Europe is a fine place, yet something seems to lack,
The past is too much with her, and the people looking back;
But life is in the present, and the future must be free;
We love our land for what she is and what she is to be.

So it's home again, and home again, America for me!
My heart is turning home again to God's countrie,
To that blessed land of Room Enough, beyond the ocean bars,
Where the air is full of sunshine and the flag is full of stars."

No wonder the men are in love with Aix, and no wonder they sing the praises of the "Y." It is the "Y" working with the American Army that makes Aix and similar leave resorts possible.

CHAPTER X

THE CHURCH IN ARMS

The boys of the 28th had just come back from their first real fight. Not all of them had come back. Some were lying out in the conquered territory and some had been hurried off to places of repair in advanced hospital units. Those who did return, returned victorious over mud and fire and foe.

The Chaplain was standing near one of the shelters resting a moment from his now multiplied duties, and thinking of the work of tomorrow—Sunday—when the regiment would gather around him for the first time after their baptism of fire together.

One of the men, seeing him apparently unoccupied, stepped up and saluting him said, "Are you thinking what you will preach about tomorrow, sir?" The Chaplain had already selected his text and his subject, but the opportunity was too good to lose and if necessary, he could change both text and theme, so he said, "Yes, I was just wondering what the boys would like to hear, and I am not sure what I ought to preach." The lad's face lighted up. "I'll tell you what to preach about," he said. "I think it's the last verse in the Gospel of Matthew, 'Lo, I am with you always.'" Then, after a pause, he continued, "I have known those words ever since I was a boy, but I never knew what they meant until these last few

days. There were minutes when I never expected to come out alive, and the words kept coming back into my mind, and I knew I was not alone. After that, it didn't matter what happened." It is the mission of the Church of Christ to bear witness to the fact contained in the soldier's text, "Go . . . and lo, I am with you always."

Whatever failure the American Church must confess regarding the fulfillment of her duty to the non-Christian peoples at home and abroad, certainly she is awake and alert to the obligation of service in relation to the Great War. Neglectful of the needs of the Army and of the Navy in peace times, suddenly over night the Church has become partaker of the quickening which now stirs the nation from sea to sea. The young men who manned her Sunday schools, her music, her organized life, slipped from their places and went forth to battle. They went forward, with thousands who had forsaken or neglected the Church, and over whom the Church seemed to exert no influence. Yesterday they were unshepherded and lived their lives apart from the Church; today they are conscious of the fact that in the prayers offered in chapel and in cathedral they too have a share.

The spirit of humility has fallen like a benediction upon the Church. Office bearers and long-time members of the Church have suddenly been surprised into the position of second place. The young men, who caused them anxious and prayerful concern, have taken the scepter out of their hands and moved up through the spirit of service and of sacrifice into the

first ranks. It is this fact that the Church has had to face. She is seeing her best and bravest young men go forth ready to die, for the children, the women, and old rejected men. It is the better, giving itself for the worse, and in the heart of the Church a new love and a new consecration have been born out of the very spirit of the Cross. In every church hangs a service flag filled with stars, and the boys in France and upon the sea and in the American cantonments know that they are loved and remembered and prayed for every day in the old home church.

The cause for which they fight—what is it, but the cause of the Church itself? The crusades of old were weak and worldly movements compared with this twentieth-century crusade. When I was in France, the French papers reported with evident satisfaction the words of Elihu Root in which he introduced the Archbishop of York to the people of America: "This is not a war for Servia, for Alsace-Lorraine, for Poland, not even for Belgium," he said. "It is a struggle for the overthrow or the maintenance of all the progress that the civilization of a century has made toward Christianity. It is a war to determine whether the world shall go back under the dominion of the power of darkness, back out of the light, back again to the days of despair and ignorance and slavery, or whether the good God who is just and compassionate may still smile on a world where He is worshiped in spirit and in truth."

In this war, the Church must follow the flag. Christianity must be militant. The Church is not

set for self-defense, but for the defense of the weak against the strong, and to keep the torch of truth aflame in dark and desolate days.

The Church follows the flag in the person of the Chaplain. He is the official representative of the Church, and is part of the army organization. There is no group of men in the Army which has carried more responsibility and faced more difficulties than the chaplains. They have been tempted to turn their attention to anything and everything, and to make their primary duties secondary. They have acted as school teachers, librarians and athletic directors. They have been hidden away for days at a time censoring mail. They have served in the post exchange and on court materials, and have featured moving-picture entertainments. Their parish has doubled and yet they have been given no additional assistance and little equipment. They formerly served a regiment of 1,000 men, and they now continue to serve a regiment after it has been increased to 3,700. Through the efforts and interests of the Church, and the sympathetic cooperation of the Army, the intention now is to have one chaplain for every 1,200 men.

Notwithstanding the rapid increase in the number of chaplains, the whole subject is full of perplexity. The chaplains are appointed as representatives of the denominations, in proportion to their numerical strength, and consequently are without organization or unified programme. To meet the needs of the situation a chaplain staff has been appointed consisting of three Protestants and two Catholics, with

Bishop Brent as Chairman. This committee will endeavor to relate and organize the chaplain force and to foster a spirit of unity and purpose among the official representatives of the Church in the Army.

The splendid service of obscure chaplains will multiply the war literature of the world and feed the faith of the church for centuries. At Passchendaele a Canadian officer said, "Without the Chaplain it would be impossible to keep the morale of the men." Whenever there is need and danger, there you find the padre of the camp. "Our Chaplain," says a private of the First Royal Irish Rifles, "is always in the trenches with the regiment. He has faced death forty times since we came out. I have seen him in the front trenches hearing confessions, with bullets in showers like hailstones pasing overhead. That is what makes soldiers fight well and die calm. When they have loads off their consciences, their minds are easy, and they don't fear death."

Writing from the battle-field in France in the early days of the war, a British soldier gives a revealing picture of the chaplain's opportunity:

"A padre turned up yesterday, and at night (it was not safe to begin earlier) we held a service which a great number of our men attended, and afterwards there was a large attendance at Holy Communion. It was a strange sight. It was in a wood, in black darkness save for two candles on a packing-case which served as an altar; the chalice was a tin mug; the soldiers, grimed with battle, each with his rifle, knelt in a circle round the light. There must have been such scenes in very early Christian days."

One Saturday night, I found myself among the ruins of a French town, on the Lorraine front. The town had been shot to pieces in the early days of the war, and the day I arrived a shell had exploded in what formerly was the main street of the village, killing five mules and wounding a soldier who was on guard. From this town the trench system began and every now and then the sky was lighted up with star shells. I went into the cellar where the Y M C A had its headquarters and where in the pale flickering candle-light, the boys obtained tobacco, chocolate, matches, and a little fellowship. I pushed on through the dark passage-way into the rear cellar. A man was sitting alone, looking into the flame of the little wood fire which was the only light in that dark and dismal dwelling. As I entered he looked up, and the fire lighted both our faces. "Great Scott," he said, "how did you get out here?" I had known him in other days and had seen him when comfort and reputation were his, but I had never seen him so satisfied nor so sure of his calling, as he was under the sound of American guns in France. "This is the real thing," he said, and carried me away to show me the improvised chapel where, in the morning, he and his men would meet God face to face.

In France, the churches of America function not only through the chaplains, but through the Y M C A. When asked as to the relation of the "Y" to the Church, Gipsy Smith said, "A communication trench." That explanation, however, is both inadequate and misleading for the "Y" and the Church are

and ought to be one. They are one in their personnel and one in their purpose.

Denominations have laid aside their differences and have concentrated upon the task of helping our men and they find the "Y" the channel through which that service can be rendered most efficiently. Never before in history could Christians more truly sing,

"We are not divided,
All one body we."

The Red Triangle is the sign not only of the Y M C A, but of the churches of America, and clergymen from all denominations, bishops and rectors, pastors and professors, presidents and preachers, elders and deacons, Sunday school teachers and Y M C A Secretaries, all in uniform, and all without rank distinction, are serving in the huts across the sea.

The "Y" took E. C. Carter from India, F. B. Shipp from America, and D. A. Davis from Turkey, and placed in their hands this sacred trust. Trained to think in international terms, they have won the confidence of the American and Allied Armies, and of their leadership General Pershing has expressed his warmest approval.

To every man responsible for the religious work in the camp, Dr. Robert Freeman, the eloquent poet-preacher of California and head of the Religious Work Department, has issued the following instructions:

"The big worth of the Y M C A lies in the Secre-

Executive Secretaries Overseas
E. C. Carter and F. B. Shipp

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tary himself. His service, his thoughtfulness, his unselfishness, far outweigh the supplies of the canteen or the conveniences of the hut. There is no substitute for his simple brotherly kindness, nor sales, nor shows, nor sermons. It is the mightiest kind of preaching.

Nevertheless, we want to make sales and give shows and deliver sermons, and we need far-sighted planning that these may accomplish the greatest measure of good. We know that religion is not in organization, but we know, too, that the reach of religion can be extended and its grip strengthened by methods of organization.

Therefore, we propose the following concrete methods born of the experience of a number of our fellow-workers:

I. Religious Services

There shall be three regular services a week in each hut.

1. *Sunday morning:* Whenever possible have the Chaplain conduct a service. A goodly percentage of our soldiers are of the Roman Catholic faith, and it is desirable that we take pains to plan for such religious exercises as are familiar to them. If the Chaplain be a Roman Catholic, hold also a Protestant service, at least a Bible class.

2. *Sunday evening:* Have a 'sing' using wholly, or at least leading up to some favorite hymns, and being followed as frequently as possible with an address. Exchange between hut Secretaries will provide a good many speakers; in some sections addresses by army medical officers, promoting the clean life, fit in, too.

3. *Midweek service:* Plan a regular service of a devotional character for Wednesday or Thursday evenings, whichever suits best. Your own personal read-

ing will doubtless give you a few minutes' remarks, if you do not have another speaker; the singing will cheer the men up; and a prayer, whether read or impromptu, will wash the souls of your men.

II. Bible Classes

1. Have a Bible class in every company, squadron, and battery, led by one of the men, and meeting on week nights. That man may be found generally through the top sergeant. Later, when you are plentifully supplied with gospels, you could make a man-to-man visitation of your soldier family, offering a gospel to every man who wanted it without any urging on your part; at the same time telling him that if, when he had finished, he desired the whole Testament, he should report to you. This would offer you your best chance for personal work and for enlistments for your Bible classes.

2. Hold a normal class of all your leaders, instructing them on the next lesson. Nine o'clock Sunday morning is a good time.

3. Your Sunday morning Protestant service might very well take the form of a talk by you on the lesson studied the preceding week. The men will be interested and full of questions. Competition between companies in the matter of attendance might be fostered.

III. Discussion Groups

In some of our huts, Sunday afternoon discussion groups using some such text-book as "The Social Principles of Jesus," by Rauschenbusch, are making a go.

IV. Free Literature

There ought to be always in sight some pamphlets

and booklets under a sign: 'Help yourself.' Many of these will disappear when you are not looking. They may be on a counter or in a rack. I know we have not much of this thus far, but perhaps 'Friend or Enemy' has reached you, and other such. If not, I want you to know what we plan as soon as the material is in hand.

Now this seems like a great deal, I know, for you feel all the time that you are swamped with little material tasks that take all your time and leave you wearied and discouraged. For that very reason, if for no other, you must make such plans as the above. Religious instruction will find no place unless you plan for it. Let us therefore, unostentatiously but constantly and systematically seek to turn men's thoughts to the highest things."

More clergymen than trained Y M C A Secretaries are serving in France today. They have gone forth from churches, theological seminaries, and colleges, to serve the Association, and are the pledge of the unity and spirit which exists in the American churches. The Church has seized this opportunity for service, and has contributed through the channel of the Y M C A clergymen, laymen, money, and leadership, in hitherto undreamed-of proportions. In this war the entire Church is in arms.

After a Sunday evening service, where the boys to the number of 500 were gathered, a Jewish lad from Pittsburgh put his arm over the preacher's shoulder and said, "Tell the Y. M. H. A. back home to give all its money to the Y M C A, for it has made me feel at home here, and it has no respect for any religion."

We understand the fine sentiment behind his words. The Y M C A had respected his faith, and through the doors of the hut he had entered into the atmosphere of home.

Church union is in France an accomplished fact. Frequently the Communion is served by ministers of all denominations assisting. In the service on Sunday and week-night, Protestant, Catholic, and Hebrew sit upon the same benches. On Good Friday a priest of the Roman Catholic faith, together with a Baptist clergyman, explained the "Stations of the Cross." In one case a Y M C A clergyman acted as interpreter at the last sacrament administered by a French priest to a dying American soldier. We have long prayed for unity. Let us pause for a moment to give thanks.

It takes virile and versatile men to do front line work in France, and it is surprising how many clergymen are promoted to that service.

When our first division moved from the eastern front into the line of battle to help stem the German advance, the entire service of the Y M C A had to be transplanted. Fourteen trucks, loaded in the night with tents, equipment, and canteen supplies, moved out along the road at daybreak. Two young clergymen from Western Pennsylvania headed the party, and when night fell, those fourteen trucks drew up at the destination where the troops were disembarking near the French front, and were greeted by the familiar and hearty welcome. "Here comes the old 'Y.'" That is part of the reward that comes from following the flag.

A well-known clergyman from the West, who was known among the boys as "Angel-Face" because of his pleasing ways and cheery smile, was assigned to manual labor at a base camp. His first task was road-making. He drove a truck loaded with broken stone from the quarry near by, to the highway that needed some quick repair work. For some days he labored and his hands became bruised and calloused. His second task was building a hut and putting the canteen in shape for efficient service. One morning he was commissioned to Paris for supplies, and while there overheard three American chauffeurs who were standing near the entrance at headquarters, talking. One of them said, "It makes me sick to see these d——d preachers loafing around here doing nothing." "Angel-Face" went on into the building to cool off, but instead of becoming cooler he got hotter, and coming to where the men were still talking, he faced his man. "I heard what you said just now about those d——d preachers and I want you to understand that I'm one of them. Look at my hands. They are hard as iron, and unless you take back your dirty words, I'll knock you down." The man hedged and hesitated, but "Angel Face's" iron fist was near his head, and another critic of the clergy was silenced. "I didn't mean anything, Mister," said the chauffeur. "Well, why don't you say what you mean?" said "Angel Face" and walked away. Down near the front he is no longer called "Angel Face"; his pals call him "Gyp the Blood."

Two of our soldier boys passing through Paris were

seeing the city. The ever-alert "guide" had discovered them and had engaged himself to show the soldiers the sights of Paris. At an opportune moment a clergyman wearing the Y M C A uniform passed and took in the situation at a glance. "Where are you taking the boys?" he quietly asked the guide. "None of your business," came the retort. "Well, we'll see if it's not my business," said the Clerical Secretary. "I have a free hour now and I'll go along." That proposition did not suit the "guide," for he knew the insignia of the Red Triangle. He grew ugly and closed in to fight, but before he knew what had happened he found himself lying on his back. When he arose he took to his heels and disappeared round the corner. The next day those two boys visited their new-found friend at headquarters, and left with him a little package. When the clergyman opened it he found a little American flag with a note thanking him, not for protection—they could take care of themselves—but for the courage and the reality of his friendship.

There is scarcely a town in America that has not released one or more of its pastors for war work service under the direction of the Y M C A. Half the force that mans the British huts comes from the ranks of the clergy, and American churches will make willing sacrifices that the Army and the Navy may be ministered to in all good things. From city and rural churches, from Eastern states and from needy Western communities, men trained for spiritual ministry are serving in prominent and obscure places overseas. Concerning the service of one of these men, whom the

Church at home has sent to the men in France, Ralph W. Harbison of the War Work Council, who accompanied me to France, writes:

"After a supper of chocolate, war bread, and canned beef, the six of us Secretaries were ordered to the cellar of the 'Y,' together with fifty soldiers who happened to be in the old shell-torn building, as the Boche were beginning again to shell the town. We took candles, a big basket full of canteen supplies to last us in case we should have to be dug out later, overcoats, and blankets. We fitted our gas masks on, to be sure they were working well, and then settled down, or tried to, in the dungeon, and here I saw the first real service of the chief 'Y' man, the Rev. George Clarke, pastor of the Presbyterian Church at La Grange, Oregon—a real man among men, who had not left his post for fourteen days. He entered the cave last and noticing that the soldiers were very quiet and perhaps a bit anxious, he said cheerily, 'Well, boys, let's sing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic,"' and then he read them some good poems and talked to them. We expected to have to stay all night but in an hour a sentry called 'all out' and out we gladly went. The rest of the evening we spent upstairs in one of the reasonably whole rooms with piano and songs and stories and the ever-present and wonderful canteen. An ex-New York motorcycle policeman, who holds the world's hurdle record, led the singing and told a funny story of his arrest of three Brooklyn boys on Brooklyn Bridge for some minor offense. The three boys mentioned were right there in the group and laughingly confirmed it all."

One wonders whether the soldier or the minister, or the Church at home that makes such ministry possible,

receives the greatest blessing. Certainly the men who thus serve will, when the war is ended, be trained and prepared for a service which the new world will sorely need.

Much is being written today about the Church of the future. Theorists are at work, denouncing former creeds by which men lived and died and formulating new creeds for tomorrow. The creed of tomorrow will not be made by what Kipling calls "The Perseverance Doubters and the Present Comfort Shirks." It is being fashioned now in the fire and it is being lived by those who find themselves in at the battle front. The Civil War made for division in theology, and for denominational Christianity. This war has already made for religious reality and Christian unity. The Spirit of God is moving on the face of humanity and where the Spirit of God is, there are liberty, equality, and fraternity.

I found no tendency on the part of the men of the American Army in France to criticize the Church. In civilian and military life, the door of opportunity stands open and if the Church fails now to enter and possess her heritage, she will have missed the greatest opportunity in history.

Those who have heard in Paris the shriek of the siren in the night, telling them that the death-dealing bombs of the enemy are overhead, will never forget that weird sound. It sends soldiers and sailors, officers and men, women and children, in utter helplessness in search of safety. It stops trains and railways, and the doors of hotels and shops are closed, while silence

broken by the explosion of bombs reigns over the city. An hour, two hours, three hours, go by, and then in the streets one hears the glad clarion notes of the recall. The trumpeter with the silver trumpet, borne through the streets in automobile or in fire engine, sounds those silver notes that thrill with the triumph of victory, and from their shelters men and women come forth to breathe the breath of full life again.

The Church for years past has listened to the call of the siren. Already another note is heard in the literature and legislation of the world. It is the note that sounds the recall. It is the trumpet of God calling men forth to full life to the celebration of the triumph of Truth, to the recognition of the supremacy of the spirit.

CHAPTER XI

SANS CAMOUFLAGE

Camouflage is a war word. Yesterday it was unknown, today it is one of the commonest words in the world. It speaks of war. It suggests the kiss that betrays, the olive branch that is a sword, the treaty that is a scrap of paper. It transforms a battery into a grove of trees, an ammunition dump into a field of grain, a moving train into a herd of cattle in the meadow. Camouflage enables things to be other than they seem.

There is a tendency now to use the word in relation to religion. I suppose it can be so used. The word is just French for hypocrisy. It may be possible to relate the word to religion in times of peace, but it is increasingly difficult and dangerous to do so in a world at war. There is no camouflage about religion at the front. The one thing that has not succeeded with the men of the Army is a camouflaged religion. The Army demands reality. Soldiers and sailors abhor hypocrisy. They surrender to sincerity.

One dark moonless night I drove out from the Y M C A headquarters in a Ford truck to the front line. The guns were speaking and the sky was luminous with shell fire. We traveled along the registered highway over roads screened on both sides and overhead. We passed soldiers marching to the front, and

army trucks loaded with ammunition creeping slowly towards the battle-line. The road was rough from much wear and from frequent shell explosions and ran into the wooded hills of the Lorraine front, where the trees had been stripped by shrapnel and the hillsides gutted with shell holes. One could count hundreds of shell holes to the acre.

Leaving the highway, we followed a narrow trail through the hills where sentries stood beside abri-shelters until we had lost all reckoning as to direction and distance. The road ended in a "Y" dugout, where the soldiers who had just returned from the trenches were waiting the coming of canteen supplies. The men had been in the fire and had lost some of their pals in the barrage.

Late in the night we walked further into the mystery of the hillside and discovered hidden in the trees a little rustic chapel, faith's abri-shelter, a shrine of the soul, where in that lonely and desolate land men discovered themselves in the light of the eternal. The boys with their own hands had built it out of the trees of the woods and there it stood—an expression of undying faith and of religion which always speaks the last word of life.

The nearer one gets to the front line trenches the nearer one gets to God. "Writing in a tragic hour a solemn page of history, we resolved that it should be sincere and glorious." Thus wrote Cardinal Mercier in the dark days of Belgium's martyrdom. When men come face to face with things inscrutable they are not far from making the great discovery. God is not far

off. Wherever there is helplessness, when men cannot by logic understand and explain, they "touch God's right hand in the darkness." "Clouds and darkness are round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne." When the temple is filled with smoke the prophet discovers God. It is the history of all the ages. At the end of the path, when human helpers fail, men discover God. It was in the forests of France that the faith of the Huguenots was born. It was on the mist-covered hills of Scotland that the Covenanters' creed was fashioned. It was in the fire of affliction that America was reborn, and out of the furnace of fire our men are climbing the great world altar stairs that slope through darkness up to God.

The Serbian Ambassador to France told us that when the remnants of the Serbian Army were taken by the Allies across to the island of Corfu in the Adriatic, all of their priests had been lost or slain, and a peasant school teacher among them composed for them this prayer to represent the faith and unconquerable spirit of the Serbian Army and people.

"O, Lord God, our Father and our Creator, God of Justice, God of Truth, God of Pity, hear our prayer, the prayer of the whole Serbian people, crucified and agonized.

From a country where we are strangers, where we wait with longing, our wives and our children, far, far, from our Serbian motherland, kneeling and with tears, we implore Thee, Lord.

By the might of Thy hand stay up, Almighty

Creator, the throne of our King, keep and guard and preserve the Serbian Army, the Serbian people, our little ones, and our youth who are in bondage and in distress.

For them and for us, we pray Thee, graft in our hearts the spirit of wisdom and of faithfulness and of endurance, that we may bear ourselves like men, and, that even out of these untold wrongs and these bitterest trials, we may still turn our hearts to Thee, our God.

For Thou, O God, art the source of all power and might. Hearken then to our prayers; hear the cry of our distress, and bring ere long our bark of life out of danger and to the haven of rest from suffering.

And to Thee, be the glory throughout all ages now and forever more, Amen and Amen."

Even if one has never seen the battle front, he knows that God has come nigh to men in the fighting line. He has read of it, even if he has not seen it. He has read of Private Peat's vision of Calvary as he lay out in the mist and the shadows among the dead and the dying. He has read of it in the poetry of Rupert Brooke, whose verses before the war awoke no real response, but whose war sonnets are winged with immortality. But at the battle front he is sure of it.

One dark night in the Lorraine sector, after we had gone as far as we could towards the front, we came to a destroyed and ruined village. At the edge of the village the trench system began that led out to "No Man's Land." The village was in ruins. The little stone church had been totally destroyed. The

tombstones in the cemetery were shattered and mutilated. While we were out in the trenches shells from German guns came shrieking over our heads and exploded among the ruins behind us. American soldiers were quartered there in cellars and in what was left of the houses. Underground we found a little improvised chapel. The Chaplain lived there with his men and had gathered from the ruined church the symbols of worship which had escaped destruction. Nothing was perfect. Everything had been mutilated. Statues of Christ without arms or head were there. Mutilated images of the Virgin were there. Leading down from that cellar chapel was a cave in which twenty American soldiers were sleeping. It was a sight never to be forgotten—the sleeping soldiers and the improvised chapel amid the ruin and desolation wrought by the Hun. In the danger and in the dark the men somehow felt that God was near.

In the ruined buildings the Secretaries of the Y M C A carry on their ministry of help and hope, and there at night these same Secretaries with their packs upon their backs go through the communicating trenches into the front line and out to the distant listening posts, serving the men. In one night one of these men going from place to place held ten services in the trenches, reading the gospel message by a flickering candle light, and speaking a word of faith and love. The evidence of religious response is found everywhere.

On the night of Good Friday the men had gathered in one of the huts. It was behind the lines and the

sound of the guns was constant. The Chaplains and the Y M C A men, the Commanding Officer of the camp and his staff, two or three Y M C A women, a French officer, a few French soldiers in blue, and two or three hundred of our American boys were ready to receive and welcome the religious message. That dark hut and the booming of the guns will always live in our memory. But most significant of all is the memory of the hush that fell upon the men as we read to them the story of the crucifixion, of the greatest tragedy in human history, where faith and love were crowned. The lesson required no comment.

Along the river Marne, during a rest interval when orders had been received that the camp was to be moved and then countermanded, the Y M C A Secretary, who was a lay-evangelist, received permission from the Colonel and from the Catholic Chaplain to conduct in the camp a series of week-night religious services. These services were continued for ten nights with unabated interest, and before they closed sixty men had openly confessed Christ, and sixteen had been baptized in the river Marne by the Chaplain from a neighboring camp.

In an Australian rest camp, at a time when several companies of soldiers were ordered back to the front, a large religious service was held, conducted by the Church of England Chaplain and a clergyman from one of the Australian churches. They talked to the men in the most serious and direct manner, using as their text the command given to Joshua when he was about to undertake his very dangerous campaign:

"Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

After the service the Holy Communion was administered, and then the men went out, prepared for the order to advance.

One may say that it is the sense of fear that leads men to serious thought. Perhaps. Yet these are not the men to charge with fear. It ill becomes us to make such a charge against the men who are going forth to make the supreme sacrifice. It is truer perhaps to say that the sense of mystery, the sense of human helplessness, the creation of a new scale of values, has much to do with it. Old things have passed away. The things that once held the heart—money, pleasure, ambition—have vanished away, and the things that abide—faith, hope, and love—these remain.

Perhaps it is true that the soldier is superstitious. He sees crosses and statues unharmed in the midst of desolation, and he thinks there must be a reason. Certain it is that the sacraments have a strange fascination for the men and have obtained new significance out on the battle front. It is true also that the horror of the great wickedness that has broken out in the world has challenged the thought of the Army. Behind the military movements some awful thing has motived men. War is full of agonizing brutality. It is easy for folks in the safe security of their homes five thousand miles from the firing line to glorify

war. The soldier who faces the fire, faces neither glamor nor glory. He faces mud and noise, cruelty and confusion. He faces the reversal of Christianity. He faces the deceitfulness and wickedness of men. He comes again to believe in hell because he believes in justice, and he understands now as never before that where there is iniquity and moral evil there can be no peace. He sees a place for the words of Jesus, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

A recent writer, who ten years ago was a pronounced evolutionist in the realm of religion, whose vocabulary was freighted with words that spoke of development, immaturity, progress, imperfection, recently said:

"Sin is not immaturity. There is a difference between a green apple and a worm-eaten apple. Growth will ripen the green apple, but growth will only add to the size and the appetite of the worm. There is a difference between the crudities and carelessness and mischiefs of a boy and the criminality of a Bill Sykes or an Iago. Sin is not good in the making. A process of making has been going on in Germany for the last half century, and never will it restore the Germany of Kant and Hegel, of Goethe and Schiller, of Luther and Melanchthon. Sin is positive, aggressive, destructive, and it is to be confronted with weapons that destroy and with a wrath resolute to destroy."

The only fact that seems to satisfy is the fact of Christ. These men have no theological theory, but in Christ they see evil conquered and purity upon the cross triumphant. In Him they see all that is lovely

and purest in human life taken by wicked hands and put to death in the most cruel fashion that the world has ever seen. And they have seen him dying, agonizing, yet unafraid, unconquered and unconquerable.

During the South African war a Boer marksman shot an Irish soldier near the Tugela river. The South African immediately set about to strip the soldier of his clothes. He took off his overcoat, his belt, and his shirt, and then saw, lying next the heart that was still, a cross. He stood for awhile and gazed at it. The great gulf of war yawned between him and that Irish Catholic. It was only for a moment, but that yawning chasm was bridged. He covered the naked body with the overcoat that he had intended to take, and walked away. He was in the presence of reality and was bound by a subtle sympathy that he could not explain. These are days when Christ comes into his own.

The great note in the teaching of the Church in the past was safety. Personal safety was the goal of much religious effort. It is a true note in the teaching of Christianity. No man can be of service until he, himself, has his feet on the rock, and personal salvation is written deep into the teaching of Jesus. It is embedded in the hymnology of the ages. "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me," "Nearer, My God, to Thee," strike true and tender chords. The General who said, "I need no preparation for retreat, I will advance," was beaten. Security belongs to things fundamental, but we may think too much of security. We may allow our religion to find a per-

sonal rather than a social goal. These men in the Army are not drawn by a gospel of security. They have thrown security to the wind. They are facing the fire and are prepared for danger and death.

Personal safety has no charm. The Croix de Guerre comes only when safety and security are abandoned. The great word is service. Negative things have passed away and behold, things have become positive. The restrictions of home and church and comrades have disappeared and men live an independent life. Religion is no longer a matter of Sunday observance, and church-going, and abstinence from card-playing. All the frills and fashions of conventional religion have gone, and the things of the spirit have become of themselves the real and determining things of life. The spirit of Pharisaism, all too intimately related to conventional religion, is abhorred and the things men do determine character. Thus it is that the supreme words of the Gospel become charged with new meaning. Calvary, Gethsemane, and the Cross are full of revealing truth and interpretative of the agony of the battle-ground. Humanity for its own sake becomes sacred, and brotherhood is no longer a dream, but a benediction. The motto on the picture of Joan of Arc that hangs in her own little church at Domremy, near where many American soldiers are billeted, *"Vitam pro fide dedit,"* is the motto of modern militant Christianity. We too are called upon to give our lives for our faith.

I stood one day in the city of Verdun, that silent city of the dead, with its shattered walls and broken

buildings, where more of humanity sleeps beneath its ruins than has been in its streets since the siege; that city of 20,000 inhabitants, which burned for two weeks, but which defied the might of the Crown Prince and buried him in obscurity. We wandered through its desolate and silent streets, with shrapnel at our feet, the shops showing signs of having been vacated suddenly, the trees shattered and torn by shells. Instinctively we wandered into the cathedral, that had stood on that same spot since the eleventh century. Everything was gone; the roof had been torn open, the windows shattered, the pillars broken by shell and bomb. It was a scene of desolation and of disaster. Its priests had disappeared, and only a soldier in blue kept sentry duty over the sacred ruins. The day before a shell had come crashing through what was left of the roof and had embedded itself in the marble floor. Everything was confusion and desolation, and yet one thing remained. The high altar was untouched. The high altar, resting on four spiral porphyry pillars, was still unscathed.

One does not need to be superstitious to see in that altar of sacrifice, standing in the midst of ruin and desolation unharmed and untouched, a symbol of faith, of imperishable reality, of the things that abide. Amid the ruin, devastation, and destruction, the shattering of purposes and plans, the thing that cannot be shaken remains.

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